LIBRARY
STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE
JOHNSON CITY, TENNESSEE

THE Nation

AMERICA'S LEADING LIBERAL WEEKLY SINCE 1865

VOLUME 151 NEW YORK · SATURDAY · SEPTEMBER 28, 1940 NUMBER 13

The Shape of Things

GENERAL DE GAULLE'S EXPEDITION TO Dakar is wrapped in mystery at the time of going to press. Early reports from Vichy spoke of a prolonged bombardment of the town and its defenses by a British squadron, but a later communiqué from London stated that after De Gaulle found it impossible to land his troops peacefully he withdrew, not wishing to provoke a conflict between Frenchmen. It is reasonable to suppose that, knowing the allegiance of the colony to Vichy was strained, he believed his mere appearance in force would suffice to bring it into the company of "Free Frenchmen." There is no clue as to what steps he will now take, but it would not be surprising if he disembarked in the little British colony of Gambia, which forms an enclave in French Senegal, and sought to spread from there his propaganda for a breakaway from Vichy. It is easy to understand why the British would like to control Dakar, for if Gibraltar should become untenable this most westerly point of Africa would be of great importance in protecting the route to the Cape.

✶

THE AXIS CONFERENCE IN ROME SEEMS TO have been largely devoted to planning a winter campaign in the Mediterranean designed to expel the British from that sea. Obviously Gibraltar must have occupied an important place on the agenda, but we have yet to learn whether it is to be attacked simultaneously with the drive toward the Suez Canal, thus making it necessary to bring Spain into the war at an early date, or whether a resounding victory in the Near East is to be sought first. As Jay Allen points out in an article on page 263, any notion that Spain will remain "non-belligerent" throughout the war is pure wish-fulfilment. But in view of its weakened condition, and the probability that Britain can still strike a hard counter-blow, the right moment for discarding the mask is a matter for nice calculation. It is likely, therefore, that the next Axis move will be an intensification of the conflict in the eastern Mediterranean, and many signs point to Greece as the next victim.

BAD WEATHER AND THE SYSTEMATIC RAIDS of the R. A. F. on coastal concentration points have encouraged the British in the belief that attempts at invasion have been postponed, perhaps for months. But they realize that they must be prepared to withstand a heavy pounding from the air until such time as the British air fleet attains a definite preponderance. In the past week the defenses of London have shown no signs of weakening and few daylight raiders have succeeded in breaking through. Night attacks, however, continue to cause heavy damage and loss of life, and there can be no doubt that industrial production in the London area has been seriously hampered. Showing quick responsiveness to public opinion, the British government is now rapidly moving to make up for the lack of deep shelters. The cellars of office buildings and large houses are being opened to the unprotected East End workers, and a spur of the subway system has been closed to traffic and will provide cover for three-quarters of a million people. In view of the skepticism aroused here by reports of British aerial successes, it is encouraging to note that Brigadier General George V. Strong, an official U. S. Army observer, stated on his return from London a belief that the British had been frank about their own losses and conservative in their claims of successes. He also expressed the opinion that British pilots were generally superior to the German.

✶

JAPAN HAS MOVED INTO INDO-CHINA IN what appears to be full agreement with the local French authorities. Some French troops, presumably those in sympathy with General de Gaulle, offered stubborn resistance to the Japanese invader, but at this writing it is not certain whether or not the fighting is still going on. The agreement is said to give the Japanese the privilege of establishing three air bases in northern Indo-China near the Chinese border and of garrisoning these bases with 6,000 Japanese troops. A "limited" number of Japanese have also been allowed to land at Haiphong, which is to serve as a base for the invaders. No figures are as yet available here, but it is obvious that once permission for entry has been won, Japan will insist on as large a force as proves necessary to

Published weekly and copyright, 1940, in the U. S. A. by The Nation, Inc., 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. Entered as second-class matter, December 13, 1879, at the Post Office of New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

conduct successful operations against Yunnan province in China and to garrison a base for further operations in the South Seas. Secretary Hull has condemned Japan's move into Indo-China, declaring that it has upset the international status quo under duress and in face of the expressed disapproval of the United States. The fact that the French authorities have offered no resistance to Japan makes military action by this country unlikely. But it may speed negotiations to give the American fleet access to Singapore, and may precipitate the embargo on the export of oil and scrap iron to Japan.

*

THE MEETING OF THE NEW YORK STATE C. I. O. was a stormy one, in which the pro-Roosevelt followers of Sidney Hillman clashed head on with John L. Lewis's anti-Roosevelt followers, backed by the Communists and near-Communists. The seething pot boiled over before the convention got under way when the Hillman "right-wing" group challenged the credentials of 91 delegates on such technicalities as lateness in filing credentials. The left-wingers, headed by Michael Quill, charged in turn that 37 Hillman delegates came from locals which had not been affiliated the full three months required for representation. Leaders of the pro-Hillman faction insist that there was no intention to bar some of the 91 delegates, such as those from the American Newspaper Guild, but that they were being kept out only until the credentials committee could complete its check-up and bring in a final report. They maintain furthermore that they had informed the minority group after the first clash on the floor that they would agree to seat all 91 of the challenged left-wing delegates if the Quill group would withdraw their challenges against the 37 pro-Hillman delegates. According to this version, the anti-Hillmanites refused unless the majority would agree in advance not to introduce a resolution favoring the re-election of President Roosevelt. When this proposal was turned down and before some of the 91 delegates could be admitted, the left-wingers bolted, with the blessing of Lewis.

*

MR. QUILL AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE anti-Hillman bloc strenuously repudiate this explanation, and there is no way of getting at the truth of the matter. But it is not necessary to know whether such a deal was suggested to note the compelling external evidence that the left-wingers could have avoided the split. If all the delegates had been seated, the Hillman faction would have had a majority for their pro-Roosevelt resolution. Therefore they could have afforded an agreement to abandon challenges on both sides. The faction led by Quill, on the other hand, had everything to lose by such an agreement, and, given the objective of blocking a Roosevelt indorsement at any price, they had no choice but to bolt. This interpretation is admittedly based on circumstantial evidence and subject to change, but nothing has emerged so far to lead one to suppose that Roosevelt was not the major issue at Rochester, with Hillman only a convenient target. A clear-cut stand by Lewis would have prevented the Rochester fiasco. Was this a last desperate move designed to show the President that Lewis is still a political factor to be reckoned with? It is significant that in taking sides at Rochester Lewis refrained from mentioning Roosevelt, leaving a line of retreat still open. Recently some 500 out of 700 locals of Lewis's own union nominated Philip Murray for president of the Mine Workers. The nomination will not be made public unless Murray, a Roosevelt supporter, indicates a willingness to oppose his old chief—and that in turn may hinge upon Lewis's political conduct in the next few weeks.

*

THE PRESIDENT SHOULD DELAY NO LONGER in reappointing J. Warren Madden to the vacancy on the National Labor Relations Board. For weeks the board's work has been seriously hampered by the lack of a chairman. Mr. Madden is by all odds the ablest candidate for the position. Although the two other members of the board have shown great ability, Mr. Madden's fairness and sound interpretation of the law have made his record a brilliant one in face of great practical difficulties. To allow considerations of political expediency to rise above recognition of ability and experience would be a calamity at this delicate stage in the board's development.

*

RECENT RECRUITS TO WENDELL WILLKIE'S banner include the New York *Times*, the Steuben Society, and Dr. Francis E. Townsend of the Townsend Pension Plan. The *Times's* support is partly based on the fact that the Republican candidate has adopted the President's foreign policy. The Steuben Society and Dr. Townsend, on the other hand, evidently believe that he is nearer to isolationism than Mr. Roosevelt. Again the *Times* looks to Mr. Willkie to reverse the New Deal's spending policy, while Dr. Townsend, without claiming any indorsement for his pension plan, says: "We have a long statement on the matter from his running-mate, Senator McNary, and I know without a doubt that if Mr. Willkie goes to Washington this legislation will be adopted." We hope that Mr. Willkie will find some public opportunity to discuss the Townsend plan with particular attention to the proposed method of financing it. We shall not, however, be surprised if he avoids the subject, for his boasted habit of candor appears a little wilted by the heat of the campaign. He now seems to be baiting his speeches to attract his immediate audience just like an ordinary politician. For

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

instance, in the Arizona cattle country he promised to maintain the embargo against Argentine meat, although he has often spoken of the importance of overthrowing trade barriers. Moreover, he went on to indulge in a cheap gibe by declaring that one way to rehabilitate our domestic economy was to "have the American navy eat American beef instead of Argentine beef." Apart from its ludricrous inadequacy as a recipe for prosperity, this kind of wisecracking is hardly helpful in promoting good-will in Argentina.

✶

AND GOOD-WILL IS BADLY NEEDED IN Argentina, which has just imposed what amounts to an embargo on imports from the United States under the guise of restrictions to safeguard its foreign exchange. Officially no discriminatory measures have been taken against American trade. But the Exchange Control Board has quietly refused to issue the necessary licenses for the entry of goods from the United States or Canada. Since many of the articles excluded under the action are indispensable to Argentina, it may be assumed that the ban is a temporary one. It may have been imposed to strengthen Argentina's bargaining power in the forthcoming negotiations with Warren Pierson for a loan from the Export-Import Bank. On the surface, Argentina would seem guilty of playing into the hands of the totalitarian powers by endangering pan-American solidarity at this critical time. But it must be remembered that the United States has treated Argentina rather shabbily in this matter of trade. Using health regulations as a pretext, we have barred the import of Argentine beef and mutton and the Senate has persistently refused to ratify a convention permitting the shipment of meat from the province of Patagonia, which American experts have declared free of hoof-and-mouth disease. Hemispherical solidarity cannot be based on the one-sided interests of this country. If we persist in trying to maintain these interests at the expense of the common welfare, we cannot complain if we receive a dose of our own medicine.

✶

THE DEMORALIZATION OF FRANCE GOES ON apace. An increasing number of scapegoats have been imprisoned while awaiting trial at Riom, and the municipal governments of six cities, including Lyons, of which M. Herriot is mayor, have been suspended. But such actions are no compensation to the people for the severe rationing which has been introduced and the scarcity of numerous necessities and modest luxuries. Perhaps the greatest present hardship is the barrier maintained between occupied and unoccupied France, which makes communication between the two areas almost impossible. This is undermining the authority of the Vichy government and assisting the spread of pro-fascist propaganda by such "patriots" as Déat and Doriot among the unemployed masses of Paris and the industrial north. At the same time French finances are rapidly being reduced to chaos by Nazi exactions coupled with the economic paralysis of the country. In order to meet the bill for the German army of occupation, amounting to 150 billion francs annually, or about one-half of the national income, the Vichy government is compelled to resort to the printing press. With production of the means of payment thus swollen and the supply of goods shrinking daily, a collapse of the franc appears inevitable. Meanwhile, in unoccupied France, where the press still prints some outside news, people are watching the Battle of Britain with feverish interest, knowing that their own future depends on the outcome. General Pétain and his associates evidently believed when they capitulated that Britain would have to follow suit within a few weeks. Now the strength of British resistance suggests that France might have been wiser to have adopted Reynaud's plan of carrying on the war overseas. If such thoughts spread, Pétain's prestige will be undermined and General de Gaulle's agitation in the colonies greatly aided.

✶

WHEN CHILDREN ARE BOMBED IN A GREAT city the excuse of a "military objective" may be claimed, whether or not it is justified. No circumstances so far revealed indicate any excuse whatsoever for torpedoing a ship loaded with refugees, at night, without warning, in a raging Atlantic storm. Its passengers included ninety children; eighty-three died by drowning or exposure in what must be set down as the most horrible and uselessly cruel incident of a cruel war.

✶

AMONG THE GERMAN ANTI-NAZIS ALSO ON board the ship was Rudolf Olden, formerly one of the most prominent political writers in Germany. He was long the foreign editor of the *Berliner Tageblatt;* he also wrote about internal legal questions, thereby incurring the hatred of the Nazis. His last book written in Germany was "Hindenburg." It was in fact a history of the Prussian army, for which he appropriated the phrase of Mirabeau, "Prussia is not a country which has an army but an army which has a country." He left Germany immediately after Hitler came to power and went to Oxford University, where he lectured in history. He wrote a brilliant book on Hitler, which included a political analysis of the post-war period in Europe. For the past few years he had been engaged on a voluminous work on European post-war history sponsored by the Royal Institute for Foreign Affairs. Mr. Olden was interned in June along with other anti-Nazi Germans in England but was released when he obtained an appointment to an American university.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hart on Democracy

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

IT WOULD be nice if one dared laugh at the meeting on "Americanism" (quotes mine) held the other day at the Union League Club in New York. It was funny; no one would deny it. But a lot of funny things are grim in their context, and the context of present events gave a sardonic complexion to the whole affair. At that meeting democracy was denounced in an address by Merwin K. Hart as a sort of alien "ism." Mr. Hart has made the discovery that the United States is a republic, not a democracy. It is not a recent discovery, for he expounded it at length in his book, "America, Look at Spain," published in 1939, and it is a stock contention of the Coughlinites and the Bundists and the assorted domestic fascists who are Mr. Hart's associates. More surprising is Mr. Hart's contention that democracy is a rather new heresy. In his speech he said that "Governor Lehman found it unnecessary to use the word a single time in his inaugural address in 1933 or 1935, but in his address of 1939 he used it twenty-five times and in his annual message to the Legislature last January he used it no less than thirty-three times!" (This sentence, incidentally, is lifted verbatim from his book on Spain.) The Governor's repetition of the word is not attributed by Mr. Hart to the straits in which democracy today finds itself. On the contrary, he "suspects" it was the Communist International which popularized the sinister word at its meeting in 1935. After that date democracy "became substituted almost entirely for the word 'republic.'" In any case, prior to the present European imbroglio, public men in America didn't talk about democracy. You may think you heard the word now and then, but if you did, it was probably from the lips of Communists or fellow-travelers; which recalls another discovery of this same social theorist, announced during the Spanish civil war. He then deplored the popular habit of calling Franco a fascist—a term Franco himself never for a moment disowned—and traced its use to a speech made by Dimitrov at a meeting of the Third International, probably the same meeting at which "democracy" was launched. In other words, fascism is not anything, really, but an epithet; no wonder Mr. Hart doesn't think much of the present struggle in Europe.

Mr. Hart links the term democracy with other menaces, such as aid to Britain and all sentiment in favor of stopping the dictators. I think I shall be doing the gentleman no injustice if I interpret this section of his speech as a slightly oblique expression of anti-Semitism. The war, according to Mr. Hart's remarkable exegesis, would never have been started by France and Britain were it not for some "irresponsible force" which blinded both to the fact that they were unprepared. What this force was is suggested in other paragraphs. He points out that "lawfully or unlawfully" the United States has been flooded by 200,000 to 500,000 refugees. Certain South American countries, he says, "have been invaded likewise and by similar mysterious methods." And he thinks the force which drove France and Britain to declare war may be "the same force that is urging our own Administration on. Blinded by fury at the persecution of minorities in Germany, this force would be as willing to engulf us in this [war] . . . as it was willing to engulf Britain and France a year ago." Translate this innuendo into good honest Joe McWilliams dialect and it makes more sense: The Jews got Britain and France into the war, and they are trying to get the United States in, too, to avenge their injuries at the hands of Adolf Hitler.

The New York *Times* printed an editorial on Mr. Hart's speech. It said that his attack on democracy must have "surprised his Union League Club audience," and it deplored the effect of such an attack at a moment when we are making costly preparations to make sure that no enemy will be able to force a different kind of government upon us. The *Times* is very gentle. It doesn't think Mr. Hart meant to align himself with the enemies of democracy; it only believes that he ought "to have been more careful of his words." Somewhere, off in the distance, I can hear an echo of this same editorial. It appeared in 1930 or 1931 in a German newspaper, perhaps the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, perhaps the *Vossiche Zeitung*. It urged the supporters of Adolf Hitler to think twice; it gently doubted the advisability of stamping out democratic processes. Of course it wasn't questioning anybody's motives; but one must regret expressions of contempt for established institutions which, while far from perfect, were after all . . .

The *Times* has no excuse to soft-pedal the activities of Merwin K. Hart. He is as consistent a fascist as American reaction has developed. He supported Franco openly and proudly. He went to Spain during the civil war to "investigate" the situation in rebel territory and reported that peace and plenty reigned. The bombing of Guernica had been disproved by a (Franco) government inquiry on the spot, and the massacre of Badajoz had also never occurred. All the terror was on the other side; he had not been in Loyalist Spain, but he had been told about conditions there. After the Loyalist defeat he wrote Franco's agent in the United States offering to convert his pro-rebel organization into a permanent committee to promote closer relations between Franco Spain and the United States.

But Hart's affection for fascism is not limited to Spain. He heads various organizations clustering around his New York State Economic Council, and every one is devoted to some phase of reactionary propaganda. He has collaborated actively with Mr. Dies in dredging up evidences of subversive activities on the left. On the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

right, however, he has consorted with all the anti-democratic, anti-Semitic, anti-labor, anti-government organizations and individuals that clutter our street corners and public halls. Our most prominent native Streichers are Hart's active collaborators and friends. Allen Zoll, Van Horn Moseley, John E. Kelly, James True, John B. Trevor, not to mention the redoubtable Joe McWilliams, have all at one time or another been associated publicly with Hart. He has worked with the Christian Front and the Mobilizers, with the American Coalition and the American Patriots. At a luncheon sponsored by the Economic Council, Fritz Kuhn and James Wheeler-Hill, secretary of the Bund, were invited guests. Hart's record was detailed at some length in an article by James Wechsler in *The Nation* for January 27, 1940; it is worth rereading.

This is the man whose views on democracy, the *Times* thinks, must have surprised his Union League Club audience. Since they have been proclaimed by the speaker in act and word for years past they can surprise only those who choose to be surprised. Certainly there is no evidence that the Union League Club audience reacted as the *Times* assumes it did. According to the news account of the meeting published in the columns of the *Times* itself, Mr. Hart's "audience heard him in grim silence. Many came up to shake his hand afterward."

China's New Victories

ATTENTION in this country has been focused so closely on the Japanese threat to Indo-China and the Dutch East Indies that China's recent remarkable successes against the invader have been all but ignored. With the closing of the Burma road and the route through Indo-China many observers wrote China off as another lost cause. If these routes remain closed, China's position must ultimately become desperate. But the really significant fact at the moment is that in spite of tremendous handicaps China has been striking back at the invader with unprecedented success.

It is true that the Chinese victories have all been local in scope. Most of them have been achieved by guerrillas operating on the Japanese flanks and behind the Japanese lines. Successes of this type have been won throughout the war, but there has never been a period when such local successes have been more widespread. And in several instances important positions held by Japan since early in the war have been recaptured. The most extensive engagements have occurred in southern Shansi, where the Eighth Route Army, intact despite a score of full-dress Japanese offensives to drive it out of the province, has reoccupied the strategically important mountain pass of Niangtzekwan. This pass is the only gateway to Shansi province from Hopei, and it dominates valuable coal mines, which the Chinese are reported to have flooded. Several thousand Japanese were killed, and the Chinese succeeded in capturing a number of heavy guns and other supplies. The railway linking Taiyuan, capital of Shansi, with Peiping has been cut in a dozen places in a fortnight of fighting. Following up their success, the Chinese within the past few days have recaptured Lichuanchen and Chingcheng, repulsing Japanese counter-attacks with heavy losses to the enemy. The Japanese admit that the reverses have disarranged their plans for an autumn offensive in northern Shansi.

Another rather notable victory was achieved late in August when Taierchwang, site of China's first great triumph over Japan, was reoccupied. All the railway lines in North China have been subject to constant guerrilla attack in recent weeks and have been kept more or less continuously out of operation. Chinese mobile units have once more been in evidence in the vicinity of Peiping, forcing the Japanese to close the city gates. Guerrillas have also been active outside of Canton.

In Central China mobile units have penetrated several times into the important city of Anking, capital of Anhwei province. The Japanese garrison of the city is reported to be seriously weakened by disease. Nearby, in northern Honan, the Chinese entered Chihsien, inflicting heavy casualties, tearing up fifteen kilometers of road-bed, and destroying thirteen bridges.

During recent months the Japanese have been continually on the defensive except on the coast in the extreme south, where landings have been made against Chinese opposition. Japan's one offensive weapon has been aerial bombardment. Within the fortnight air attacks on the Chinese capital at Chungking have been resumed in the obvious hope of terrorizing China into surrender. Early this month it was estimated that more than 7,000 demolition and 2,500 incendiary bombs had been dropped in some forty air raids on the capital during 1940. Despite this terrible punishment, air-raid precautions have kept the number of deaths to around 1,250—many less than were suffered in several single raids earlier in the war. Other cities have also experienced heavy raids in the past few weeks. But China has demonstrated, even more conclusively than Barcelona or London, the futility of air raids as a means of destroying the morale of the civilian population. This demonstration is particularly significant because their lack of effective defenses and their flimsy construction make Chinese cities far more vulnerable to air attacks than Western cities.

The one great threat to China at the moment is, of course, an attack in the southwest through Indo-China. Such an attack would strike at the heart of free China and might offset years of valiant resistance. China is doing what it can to protect itself. But it desperately needs aid from the democracies of the West, which have so shamefully let it down in recent months.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Nazis in the New World

IN A recent statement Dr. Albert Degner, secretary of the Board of Trade for German-American Commerce, attempted to reassure Americans about Nazi aims in Latin America. After the war, he said, Germany would offer "tremendous trade possibilities" to our southern neighbors, but it had not the slightest intention of destroying United States trade or threatening our interests.

It is instructive after reading these soothing sentiments to turn to an article by Hans W. Aust in a recent issue of the *Deutsche Volkswirt,* the most authoritative German economic weekly. There we learn that with all the preoccupations of the war Germany has not forgotten Latin America. Eager to assist the southern republics to defend themselves from "capitalist maneuvers to exploit them," young Germans are studying Spanish and Portuguese and the history, geography, and economic problems of the lands below the Rio Grande.

One conclusion reached, apparently, is that Latin American countries stand in need of a helping hand with rearmament. The *Deutsche Volkswirt* writes:

> Among the things which Germany has to offer to those who trade with it, armaments will play a very specific role. Germany's overwhelming military successes have unequivocally proved German technical superiority. Its potential industrial capacity for the supply of ammunition is virtually unlimited, and it is in a position to meet any special requirements in this field. Therefore this part of the business will probably assume considerably greater proportions than hitherto, since every army in the world will desire to examine its equipment on the basis of the latest war experiences.

In addition to this alluring prospect, the *Deutsche Volkswirt* holds out hopes of a large influx of free-spending "tourists." "Many Germans," it says, "have a burning desire to get acquainted with the beautiful countries of South and Central America, and since, after the war, it will no longer be necessary to economize on foreign exchange, they will no longer be compelled to eat in the cheapest restaurants." We seem to remember that in the years before the war many young Germans acted on a "burning desire" to explore the beauties of the fjords, but it was Norway that burst into flames.

The combination of German arms and German tourists with well-lined purses is not likely to prove a mixture conducive to the peace and prosperity of this hemisphere. Moreover, the *Deutsche Volkswirt* gives us hints of the kind of propaganda that is already being assiduously spread through Latin America.

> It is equally important for the Latin American states to know that Germany is willing and able to cooperate unselfishly in the further opening up of these regions. Previous experience has taught us that this willingness is by no means equally present among other modern industrial powers. Their chief aim so far has been to control industry and plantations. Thus the major part of the proceeds did not remain in the country of their origin but flowed into the pockets of foreign companies and their stockholders. . . . Germany, which abhors and fights these methods, offers sincere aid to Latin America. . . . German industry merely wants to participate and would leave the leadership to those who represent Latin American interests. It would be satisfied with supplying the machinery, building the plants, and *with the role of adviser to the Latin American managers.*

The ability of Nazis propaganda to be all things to all men is an old story. To the governing classes of Europe it talked anti-communism; to the working classes it spoke of the evils of capitalism; and now, in Latin America, it seizes on the potent appeal of the struggle against "Yankee imperialism." We have no doubt that if Latin America heeds this siren call it will learn that Nazi methods of exploitation are more strangling than anything the "Northern Colossus" has yet contrived.

CONTENTS

THE SHAPE OF THINGS 257

EDITORIALS:

HART ON DEMOCRACY by Freda Kirchwey 260
CHINA'S NEW VICTORIES 261
NAZIS IN THE NEW WORLD 262

FRANCO AWAITS ORDERS by Jay Allen 263
THE BLIND ALLEY OF MARXISM by Granville Hicks 264
WHERE McNARY HEADS THE TICKET by Richard L. Neuberger 268
ALMAZAN'S TEXAS JUNTA by Charles Curtis Munz 270
EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS by Keith Hutchison 271
IN THE WIND 272
A NATIVE AT LARGE by Jonathan Daniels 273

BOOKS AND THE ARTS:

CHANSON DE FRANCE. PRINTEMPS 1940 by Ivan Goll 274
THE GODDESS HISTORY by Reinhold Niebuhr 274
A GREAT LETTER WRITER by Joseph Wood Krutch 276
DIALOGUE BY WELLS by Hassoldt Davis 276
RADIO AND IDEAS by Frederick A. Gutheim 277
LOOK HOMEWARD by Louis B. Salomon 278
ONLY THE NINETY AND NINE by Sherman Conrad 278
EDITOR HOUGH by McAlister Coleman 279
IN BRIEF 281
DRAMA: AL JOLSON AND HIS MAMMY by Joseph Wood Krutch 281
MUSIC by B. H. Haggin 282

Editor and Publisher
FREDA KIRCHWEY

Managing Editor ROBERT BENDINER
Literary Editor MARGARET MARSHALL

Associate Editors
KEITH HUTCHISON MAXWELL S. STEWART I. F. STONE

Dramatic Critic
JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

*

Business Manager and Director of Circulation
HUGO VAN ARX

Advertising Manager
MURIEL C. GRAY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Franco Awaits Orders

BY JAY ALLEN

AXIS plans for Spain, whatever they are, have obviously been perfected in the highly publicized parleys in Berlin between Señor Serrano Suñer and the Nazi chiefs, and in Rome between Messrs. Ribbentrop and Mussolini. Interest in these developments has everywhere been great but nowhere greater than in Madrid, where Franco is waiting for instructions.

The Generalissimo would probably be amazed to learn that in this country press interest in his problems has taken the curious form of discussion as to whether he will "enter the war." On this point we are being given owlish opinions much like those we used to get from the experts last winter and spring when Mussolini was "non-belligerent," like Franco now, and Franco was a mere "neutral." Many of the experts inclined to the view that Mussolini would "stay out," and one, of great repute, was able to reveal along about last Christmas that the Duce had taken secret decisions that would bring him in on the side of the "democracies" by Easter!

Franco is already in the war, and the only thing that could keep him from formal belligerency would be the certain knowledge that the Axis would lose. Interest in Serrano Suñer's negotiations in Berlin and Ribbentrop's talks in Rome should center on any indications they may offer about the new role that General Franco is to be asked—or ordered—to play. One might inquire what are the facts that justify these limelighted conferences in Berlin and Rome. Franco's war aims and the war aims of the Axis have long been known to each other. What is new is that the invasion of Britain has been held up, perhaps indefinitely postponed. Franco's chance to come in against Britain as Mussolini came in against France—for the knockout—is in abeyance. If things had worked out as planned, Franco would have needed no directions to come and take Gibraltar—he could easily have done it alone under such circumstances.

Until now the cautious Axis plan for a weaker member has always been to save him for the kill, meanwhile appealing to the appeasement instincts of the "democracies"—which we know are deeply rooted—to keep him fit and in the pink until the time when he can safely enter the ring. With Britain unbeaten and the striking power of its fleet intact, and with the influence of General de Gaulle slowly spreading up the West African coast toward French Morocco, a new role has to be worked out for Franco. Either he will have the assistance of German and Italian troops in striking at Gibraltar, and possibly at Portugal and French Morocco, or he will be kept a "non-belligerent," and so convincingly one that Britain and the United States will redouble their efforts to buy him, as they tried to buy Mussolini.

In many quarters his "non-belligerency" would still be believed. As late as August 27 the New York *Times* referred editorially to the chances of "one powerful group in Madrid" being able to "resist the opposing group and stick to the policy of non-belligerency." Colonel Sosthenes Behn, of the I. T. and T., still thinks Franco *wants* to "stay out." On September 18, while Serrano Suñer was in Berlin, Raymond Clapper discussed the report that Franco might still be willing to take another American loan, though the chances, Clapper thought, were slight. Given the least encouragement, —which they may well receive one of these days—the powerful business and religious groups that have supported Franco from the start would react eagerly, even though they now know what he stands for. General Franco's champions are franker these days. They are no longer counting on him to save "democracy."

General Franco

This is Franco's war. The actual fighting stopped for him in March, 1939, but he hadn't won. He had a country in ruins, bankrupt, starving, a million enemies in his jails, a half-million just across the frontier. He could not count himself safe until the Axis triumphed. And only the Axis could give him an empire. Otherwise he would have listened to the siren voices of the pluto-democracies, promising loans and cotton credits. Franco knows what he wants and who can give it to him. If he wavered for an instant, the Falange would take care of him. If not the Falange, the Gestapo, or the thousands of German troops already in Spain.

He declared himself a "neutral" in the fall of 1939

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

when Mussolini came out as a "non-belligerent." When Mussolini declared war, Franco, twenty-four hours later, promoted himself to "non-belligerency" and as a "non-belligerent" three days later seized Tangier, which would have started a European war at any other time. Within the next few days he brought about—very ably it seems—the capitulation of his friend Marshal Pétain and helped write *finis* to whatever hopes there were of continuing French resistance in Africa.

Until Britain's fleet can no longer strike at him by bombarding Cadiz, El Ferrol, or Barcelona, by convoying a new Wellington and an army to Portugal or to French Morocco, he is terribly vulnerable. The nation needs food. He is dependent on British and American patience—wearing thin—for oil. His people could be aroused against him. It is significant for us that in Berlin and Rome they must have talked not only of "the partition of Africa" but of ways of doing it. If the Axis attacks by way of Spain, it will have to think of the backdoors, Portugal and Morocco. It may even recall that Vigo is the European port closest to American shores and that here, on this side of the ocean, is a people, with a navy, that is fast learning all the tricks of "non-belligerency."

Franco wants much—Morocco (the good part, not the dry region that he has), Algiers, and an empire. He wants that empire in lands which speak his language, practice his faith, and may yet be taught to hate not only "pluto-democracy" but even progress. He is "in the war" for a purpose. Vulnerable though he is now, he is the spearhead of the great counter-revolution. And he knows it. Did we know it when we paralyzed the Spanish republic under the pretext of maintaining neutrality? It is important that we know it at least now, because if there is no immediate German-Italian attack on Gibraltar through Spain we may be asked to keep Franco supplied with oil, loans, and food until he can gamble on a sure thing.

The Blind Alley of Marxism

BY GRANVILLE HICKS

KARL MARX and Friedrich Engels thought of themselves as the founders of scientific socialism. The utopians were eloquent in their attacks on capitalism, and they understood the general pattern of a better society, but they had no way of getting from here to there. Marx and Engels convinced themselves that history was going there anyhow, and what we had to do was get aboard. Yet it was not, after all, simply a matter of taking a ride, for when history was analyzed, it boiled down to the way men functioned. If you could say certain things about history, it was because you could say certain things about men. "If socialism is inevitable, why should we struggle?" "Because the inevitability of our struggle is antecedent to the inevitability of socialism."

Marx and Engels taught an important lesson. They saw that in the past change had come only when men desperately wanted it and when old institutions were breaking down. Institutions broke down, they thought, because economic systems, after they reached a certain stage of development, fell into decay. That was the way the bourgeois revolution had worked, and if the process was less clear in earlier transformations, something like it could be discerned. Economics, then, was fundamental—on its face not an unreasonable proposition in view of the overwhelming proportion of human energy devoted to the production of food, clothes, and shelter. Since, moreover, production in historic times has involved exploitation, there is always a struggle between the workers and the bosses; and the intensification of this struggle to its highest pitch, when economic breakdown strengthens the desperation of the former and weakens the power of the latter, is revolution.

If this is the process of change, if this is the way history works, we must understand it. Earlier revolutions, Marx and Engels insisted, have been blind, but now we can have a conscious revolution, doing intelligently what our forbears did in desperation. We want, they said, what the utopians want, but we know that it cannot be obtained by their schemes. It can be obtained by the driving force of the exploited, led by those who understand the direction of history.

In a general way all this seems true today. Capitalism, where it still exists, cannot give full employment, cannot avoid depressions, cannot wage war efficiently, cannot in the end escape stagnation. It has given birth to imperialism, which has intensified its evils without solving its problems. And it has fostered discontent by creating the possibility of abundance. Men may put up with misery for a long time. They may, as we well know, try fascism as a remedy for capitalism's failures. But if only socialism will work, as Marx and Engels taught and as there is still plenty of reason to believe—far more reason, in fact, than in their time—men will eventually come to it.

No matter how much it needs to be qualified, Marx's analysis of history, I believe, remains basic in socialist thought, guarding us not merely from futile utopian

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

schemes but also from fantastic plans for the reformation of capitalism. Yet for most Socialists socialism has not been and is not merely an economic concept. That is to say, the demand for socialism has been a conscious demand for a richer, fuller, more generous life, not merely an attempt to escape from hunger and exploitation. Modern socialism was born out of the intellectual turmoil of the bourgeois revolution, especially in its concentrated form in eighteenth-century France. Religion and philosophy had long raised the standard of the intrinsic importance of the individual, but such a standard could be adjusted to the realities of ancient and medieval social organization only by postulating a spiritual equality and a heavenly compensation for earth's injustices. The eighteenth century dared to declare that human society could be organized on the principle of equality and justice, and it promised that the bourgeois revolution would accomplish that end. The judging of the revolution by its own promises was the source of socialism.

WHAT MARX OMITTED

Let us say, then, that in the nineteenth century two forces worked toward socialism. One was the unrest of the victims of capitalism. The other was the desire for a juster, more rational society. In theory Marx and Engels put all emphasis on the former. Impatient with the futility of mere preaching, disillusioned by the way in which the bourgeoisie had bent the revolutionary idea to its own class ends, appalled by all the crackpot schemes for producing a perfect society overnight, they trusted in the revolt of the exploited. It is the collapse of capitalism, Engels insists, that will bring the revolution:

> On this tangible, material fact, which is impressing itself in a more or less clear form, but with invincible necessity, on the minds of the exploited proletarians—it is on this fact, and not on the conceptions of justice and injustice held by any armchair philosopher, that modern socialism's confidence of victory is founded.

In practice, as has often been pointed out, Marx and Engels exhibited humanitarian motives for which their theory made no room. With both of them the desire for a just society preceded the development of the class-struggle theory, and it was that desire—and certainly not self-interest or class loyalty—that made them hope and work for the triumph of the proletariat. Moral indignation against capitalism breathes through their writings and, in spite of their vigilance, every now and then becomes explicit. The climax of "Capital" is the chapter on primary accumulation, in which Marx, answering the argument that the socialist expropriation of capitalist property would be immoral, brilliantly demonstrates that the bourgeoisie secured the means of production by a process brutal and immoral in the extreme. It is true that he wrote into the preface a kind of disclaimer of this moral indignation, but it is also true that, when the book was finished, he told Engels, "I hope the bourgeoisie will remember my carbuncles all the rest of their lives." And if this seems mere spleen, it must be remembered that the letter continues, "Here is yet another proof of what swine they are," and goes on to describe a stratagem that had been employed by powerful manufacturers to dispose of a report on child labor. "The thing is of the most enormous importance," Marx insists. "It is a question of abolishing the torture of one and a half million human beings."

It is characteristic of Marx and Engels to ignore their own motives. Their whole theory rests upon a psychological assumption, a generalization about the way men will act under certain circumstances, which is never examined. In the broadest possible terms, as we have acknowledged, the generalization is supported by considerable evidence, but no practical Socialist can be satisfied with so approximate an analysis. Marx and Engels were not describing historical processes just for the sake of describing them. They proposed to use their knowledge to change the world. They wanted to shortcut, just as much as possible, the bloody blundering transition to socialism that would be the result of blind reaction to exploitation. They wanted to arm the proletariat with the knowledge that capitalism must collapse so that it would not have to wait for the collapse to demonstrate itself in all its horrible consequences. From the first it seemed clear to them that the revolting proletariat must be given direction by a group of men who understood the whole process.

But what about the motives of these men? How do you build a revolutionary party? For the masses who make the revolution conceivably no motive is necessary but the conviction that nothing can be worse than the suffering that is at that moment being endured. Socialists, however, men who propose to give a lifetime, if not a life, to the long struggle for socialism, must be moved in other ways. Since the motive obviously cannot be self-interest, the orthodox Marxist would say it was class loyalty. But why, then, should a man be loyal to his class—or, since Socialists have so often come from the bourgeoisie, to somebody else's class? No one expects a simple solution to a psychological problem of this kind, but Marxism offers no solution at all.

There is another of Marx's assumptions that has to be examined: his belief that the elimination of the economic contradictions of capitalism inevitably and automatically leads to the higher stage of social development envisaged by the philosophers of the bourgeois revolution and, in more concrete terms, by the utopian Socialists. Engels declares that, with socialism, man for the first time "enters conditions which are truly human." Lenin, in "The State and Revolution," promises the noblest kind of civilization once the state has withered away. But all orthodox Marxists insist that it is not merely unnecessary

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but dangerous to devote attention to anything but economic and political ends. Help the proletariat to get power, they exhort, and it will socialize the means of production. Classes will thereupon disappear, the state vanish, and a just, humane, and noble society be born.

The two omissions of Marxism are closely related. On the one hand, Marxism assumes that we cannot rely on good-will and humanitarian aspirations to bring change because in its view they are powerless in the conflict of economic forces. On the other hand, it assumes that economic forces can and will achieve the ends that humanitarianism points to. In so far as Marxism helps us to understand what the economic forces are and compels us to turn to the solution of economic problems, we can learn from it. But when it ignores motives other than self-interest and class interest, even though its own existence cannot be explained in terms of such motives, we have a right to be suspicious. And when, in the face of a growing body of evidence, it insists that economic change is the only change that is necessary, we are obliged to challenge it.

LENIN'S MORALITY

The basis for challenge may be found in the teachings of Lenin and the experiences of the Russian Revolution. Marx and Engels relied, often to a surprising extent, on the humanitarian appeal, even though they theoretically discarded it as useless. Lenin did without humanitarianism in practice as well as in theory. In all his writings there is scarcely a lapse into moral indignation, hardly a word that can be said to imply a moral judgment.

Communists rightly point to Lenin's conception of the revolutionary party as his notable contribution to Marxist thought. Marx and Engels, though they were constantly occupied with the specific problems of socialist and other radical parties, paid little attention to the idea of the party. They were interested primarily in the movements of the masses, and though they acknowledged in practice the need for leadership by a party, that was never where their emphasis fell. Lenin, on the other hand, thought of little else. He talked steadily about the need for a party of professional revolutionaries, and he devoted more than twenty years to building the kind of party he wanted.

Marx and Engels had spurned bourgeois morality as a bourgeois prejudice behind which class interests lurked, and they had spoken of proletarian morality. Lenin echoed their words, but transformed proletarian morality into party morality. "Our morality," he told the Young Communists in 1920, "is deduced from the class struggle of the proletariat. . . . We say: Morality is that which serves to destroy the old exploiting society and to unite all the toilers around the proletariat which is creating a new Communist society. . . . For the Communist, morality consists entirely of compact united discipline and conscious mass struggle against the exploiters."

This is a military code, and the Bolshevik Party was organized on a military basis. The Socialist parties of Western Europe, which Marx and especially Engels had alternately blessed and cursed, offered Lenin no model, for they were operating legally. His problem was to create a Marxist party in a country that had not yet had its bourgeois revolution and was suffering from Czarist oppression. A disciplined, monolithic party, taught by Marxism to occupy itself with the class struggle of the proletariat, could, he predicted, become invincible.

History gave him his chance, and in 1917 the Bolsheviks controlled Russia. Power had been his goal, power for the proletariat. But the dictatorship of the proletariat, which he called the central teaching of Marxism, meant in practice the dictatorship of the Communist Party. From 1917 to his death Lenin boasted that Soviet Russia was the most democratic country in the world, in that its rulers maintained close contact with the masses and served their interests. But the Communist Party held the power, and Lenin was quick to suppress the slightest threat to its control. Speaking in 1920 to the delegates to the second congress of the Communist International, he said frankly, "Not a single important political or organizational question is decided by any state institution in our republic without the guiding instructions of the Central Committee of our party."

A year earlier Rosa Luxemburg had written in jail:

> Without general elections, without unrestricted freedom of press and assembly, without a free struggle of opinion, life dies out in every public institution, becomes a mere semblance of life, in which only the bureaucracy remains as the active element. Public life gradually falls asleep; a few dozen party leaders of inexhaustible energy and boundless experience direct and rule. Among them, in reality, only a dozen outstanding heads do the leading, and an élite of the working class is invited from time to time to meetings where they are to applaud the speeches of the leaders and to approve proposed resolutions unanimously. At bottom, then, a clique affair—a dictatorship, to be sure, not the dictatorship of the proletariat, however, but only the dictatorship of a handful of politicians.

Long before Lenin died her prophecy was being fulfilled. We may grant that power could not have been won and held in Russia by any other methods than Lenin's. We may grant that his regime was preferable to any practical alternative, since the Kerensky government was breaking down long before the Bolshevik insurrection and, if there had been no Bolshevik Party, would have yielded either to military dictatorship or to abysmal chaos. But we cannot grant that Lenin's methods did lead, or could lead, to the kind of proletarian democracy he believed in.

Lenin never underestimated the backwardness of Russia or the difficulty of building socialism in one

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

country, but he did believe that under the leadership of the Communist Party the conditions for socialism could be created relatively quickly and with a minimum of suffering for the masses. The machine he had built, however, being designed primarily for the extension of its own power, could only with difficulty be adapted to the constructive task. Lenin made the effort. He tried to maintain power the hard way, dealing honestly with the people, seeking their opinions and carrying out their wishes as far as he safely could. But Lenin could not live forever, and what was to prevent his successor from adopting the traditional techniques of power politicians for deceiving and manipulating the masses?

This is essentially what happened. Stalin is no Lenin, certainly not in intellect and presumably not in capacity for devotion to an ideal. He took over a machine that was already geared to the maintenance of power at all costs, and lacking Lenin's prestige, he had to fight enemies inside as well as outside the party. There was little revolutionary enthusiasm for him to count on, either in the briefly convalescent capitalist world or in the Russia of the NEP. Lenin was strong enough to hold on to power, his power over the party and the party's power over Russia, and at the same time work for socialism. One may doubt whether Lenin could have accomplished as much as he hoped, but obviously the most that Stalin could do was hang on to power. I see no reason to think that Trotsky or any other rival of Stalin's could have done better.

It does not matter whether or not Stalin has his moments in which he remembers the ideals of the revolution; the simple fact is that, whatever he wants to do, he cannot work for those ideals. Lenin had hoped to see the disappearance of the bureaucracy, but Stalin finds in the bureaucracy the only firm foundation for his power. Lenin told the truth to the masses even when it hurt; Stalin uses the old mechanics of concealment and falsehood. Lenin murdered the enemies of the party when he thought it necessary, but he explained why he murdered them. Stalin murders his enemies within the party, and has a Vishinsky to shower them with abuse that Lenin would have considered a pollution on his tongue. So one could go on. The explanation is not that Stalin is a villain but that, as a lesser man working in even more difficult circumstances, he can only maintain power by methods Lenin scorned. But it was Lenin who taught him and his followers that power must be maintained at all costs, and Lenin's technique not only led to Stalinism but gave the fascists lessons by which they have profited.

POWER FOR WHAT?

If one thus indicts Leninism, it is not to deny that Lenin was a great man. In the long and bloody procession that is history he did his work with heroism and distinction. But he did not bring socialism, and socialism can never be brought by his methods.

As Rosa Luxemburg long ago pointed out, it was Lenin's folly that, obsessed with power, he tried to turn evils that had some justification in Russia into virtues to be emulated by revolutionary parties elsewhere. Transferred to such a country as the United States, the Leninist concept of the party is purely romantic. Like all romantic ideas, however, it has its attractive aspects. The enemy, the people in power, seemingly have all the advantages, well-intrenched as they are and untroubled by scruples. Why not, then, train a corps of professional revolutionaries, an army, ready to fight fire with fire? The answer is obvious, though it never seems to occur to some people. You must have the blindest faith in the leaders of this fighting corps, and not merely in their intelligence and courage, but also in their integrity. You tell them there is only one ideal to which they need to be true, the victory of the party, and turn them loose. Only when they are in power, when, in other words, it is too late to do anything about it if they have betrayed you, can you clearly discern their intentions.

And this is not all. In practice today supporting the Communist Party means giving carte blanche not merely to the leaders in this country but also to a little group of men, five thousand miles away. It is easy to see what Lenin was thinking about: the revolution was successful in one country, and that became the center of all subsequent campaigns. But the rest of the world didn't revolt, and Lenin discovered that Russia couldn't maintain itself forever as a fortress. Its national life had to go on. Immediately the practical reconciliation of Russia's interests and the interests of world socialism became a difficult problem, and it has been constantly intensified by developments since Lenin's death. Yet the Russian leaders have insisted on remaining the strategists of the Communist International, ever tightening their grip on the constituent parties, so that, as the events of last August and September demonstrate, the only Communist principle that never changes is the doctrine that Stalin knows best.

We err, however, if we put the blame solely on Stalin or on the Communist International or on Mr. Browder. The fault, as I have tried to show, goes farther back, and its roots are in the Marxist concept of power and the Marxist concept of history. Both are partly right, but both mislead us. Whoever is interested in a better social order must be concerned with power, but the question we have to ask is the wholly non-Marxist one, "Power for what?" We cannot leave it to history, as Marx and Engels did, to put the brake on the misuse of power. On the contrary, the whole process of social reconstruction must be controlled. We want power for socialism's sake, not for power's sake, and if the Leninist way does not take us to that goal we must find another.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Where McNary Heads the Ticket

BY RICHARD L. NEUBERGER

Portland, Oregon, September 14

NOT since Thomas Jefferson sent Lewis and Clark on their great journey in 1804 has the Pacific Northwest fired the imagination of any President more completely than it has that of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Evidences of this for all the world to see are the huge dams at Bonneville and Grand Coulee, a dozen lesser reclamation projects, Farm Security camps for migrants, and a genuine attempt by the Forest Service to place the vital lumber industry on a sustained-yield basis.

Competing on his own against such a demonstration, Wendell Willkie would never get to first base. His chance of carrying the Northwest and the adjacent Rocky Mountain area rests primarily with a man who shares practically all Mr. Roosevelt's views with respect to the West—Charles Linza McNary, senior Senator from Oregon and Republican vice-presidential candidate. Most independent voters along this coast share the sentiment of Eugene Allen, editor of the A. F. of L. *Oregon Labor Press:* "If McNary were the nominee for President and Willkie the nominee for Vice-President, the Republicans would be a 100 per cent better bet out this way."

Nothing succeeds like success, and the Columbia River program has been a success beyond all expectations. This was apparent as early as 1936, and in that year the seven states wholly or partly in the Columbia Basin—Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Nevada, Wyoming, and Utah—gave President Roosevelt the heaviest proportionate majority he obtained anywhere outside the solid South.

Events have given a prophetic quality to the words of the sponsors of Bonneville and Grand Coulee. The 25,000 farms that will be rescued from the upland desert at Coulee, farms which opponents of the project once pointed to as needless in a nation of crop surpluses, are now sorely needed by homeless wanderers from the Dust Bowl. Bonneville Dam dovetails perfectly with the requirements of the present national-defense emergency. Economists and military strategists agree that a wider geographic distribution of industries is imperative, and Bonneville hydroelectric power already operates a new $3,000,000 aluminum plant twenty-eight miles downstream. Plans also have been drawn for other factories which use large quantities of power and produce goods essential to rearmament. Moreover, Bonneville kilowatts, transmitted to the People's Utility District of Pacific County in Washington, for example, will reduce rates to farm and home owners next month by at least 27 per cent.

Wendell Willkie's original political build-up was as the adversary of such a program as this. Without Senator McNary, therefore, he might expect to be massacred by voters in the Northwest. Local Republicans talk at greater length about the vice-presidential nominee than about the candidate for the Presidency. McNary's portrait in campaign headquarters here is as big as Willkie's. The name of Henry Wallace decorates no Democratic buttons in the West, but everywhere this side of the Continental Divide the official Republican button is blazoned "Willkie and McNary." In some of the G. O. P. literature being distributed to the rank and file McNary is mentioned more often than the head of the ticket.

This strategy is not without reason. The death of Senator Borah last winter left McNary as the man who has served longer in Congress than anyone else from the Northwest. He is immensely popular personally as well as politically, and much of his popularity is with groups ordinarily regarded as committed to the New Deal—labor unions, farm organizations, public-ownership clubs and liberals generally. Slight though the compliment may be, the Oregon Senator is probably the most progressive individual who has had a place on a Republican national ticket since Theodore Roosevelt's day. Many times in the recent past he has complained that the management of the party was "in the hands of men who have been directing it away from social and governmental reforms demanded by the masses."

Because in many minds Willkie seems generally to fit this description, there was considerable astonishment in the West when McNary consented to run with him. The night before he was nominated McNary had wired his wife at their farm home in Oregon that he would not consider it, and desperate pleading by G. O. P. leaders was required to make him change his mind. In his acceptance speech appeared this observation on his tenure in the Senate, a tenure dating from 1917: "My record has been open to the view of my countrymen. I have supported progressive measures. I have sought to conserve and employ, for the benefit of all, our heritage of soil, water power, and forest. I stand on that record. Not one uttered word can be expunged, not one vote recalled; nor would I wish it otherwise, considering the light that has guided me." This served notice on the tories in the Republican Party that the candidate for Vice-President did not intend to disown measures which had made him

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

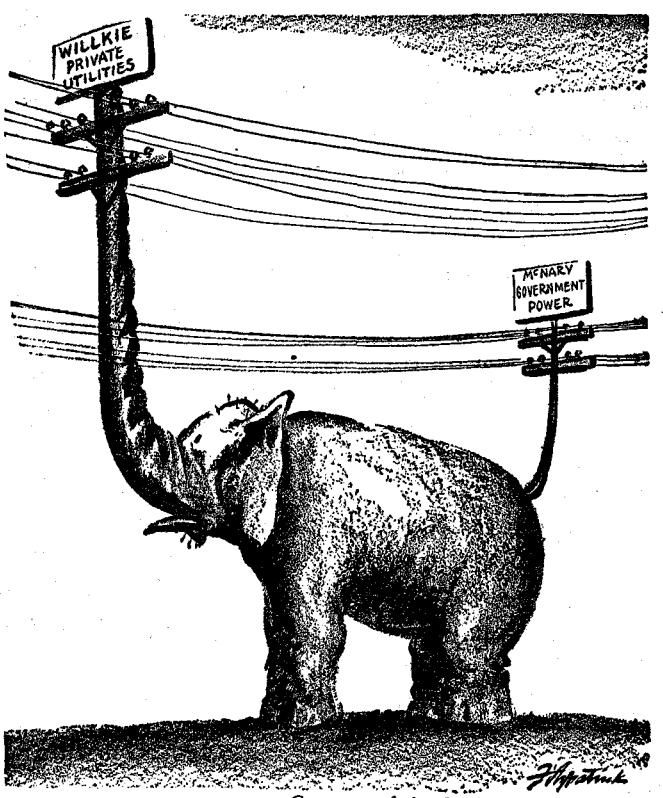
the best-liked Senator in Oregon's history. The record proudly referred to by McNary has been distinguished, not for opposition to the New Deal, but for opposition to the views expressed for many years by Wendell Willkie. As late as April of this year McNary made a brave fight in the Senate for a third federal dam on the Columbia River, and lost thirty-three to thirty-six when the bulk of the leading Republicans turned him down. All during the time that Willkie was becoming a national figure by harassing the TVA, Senator McNary was supporting TVA policies and appropriations. He even voted with Norris, Bone, La Follette, and other liberals for the bond issue with which TVA bought out the Tennessee properties of Willkie's holding company.

When it became known that McNary planned to discuss hydroelectric power in his speech of acceptance, a prominent figure in the Republican campaign phoned and timidly asked, "Senator, is power an issue in this election?" "It's an issue in two places," replied McNary, "in my part of the country and in my conscience." His subsequent statement minced few words. He indorsed Bonneville and Boulder Dam and predicted great benefits from Grand Coulee. He said water power was "a common heritage" and praised the TVA method of purchasing private utility companies. The independence of these declarations may be gauged by their contrast with Willkie's known attitude. Not long ago Willkie denounced all government power dams as "uneconomic and fallacious." And who has forgotten his famous "Tonight at Midnight" full-page advertisements deploring "government-subsidized competition," inserted in the press when the TVA purchase of his companies took effect in August, 1939? After McNary's speech Rufus Woods of the Wenatchee, Washington, *World* summed up the opinion of public-power advocates in these words: "Fine, fine! Senator McNary has always been right down the line with us. What we want to know, though, is where Willkie stands."

No one believes that the Republican running-mates are in much greater harmony with respect to foreign policy. McNary has an isolationist record. He joined with the Senate isolationists in voting to restrict the service of the National Guard to the United States and its possessions. He approved the amendment to delay conscription, an amendment specifically opposed by Willkie. In fact, many of McNary's progressive friends believe Willkie botched his big opportunity in the West when he refused to make issues of peace and the draft. In four of five recent elections in this section, men hostile to conscription have won.

Judged by his past record and utterances Willkie represents things which are political dynamite in the great open spaces—low tariffs, private power corporations, internationalism, Wall Street. McNary stands for just the opposite. Like Sinbad the sailor struggling along with the Old Man of the Sea on his shoulders, he is supposed to carry Willkie through the Far West. Can he do it? Gregarious and affable himself, McNary has been attracted by Willkie's personality. He will try to sell Willkie to the people. Perhaps he will attempt to minimize the previous differences between them. He will speak on reclamation at Spokane, eighty-five miles from Grand Coulee, and on other Western problems at Salt Lake City; the Republicans want a lot of people to see their genuine, live sponsor of public power projects. But whereas Wallace referred constantly to Mr. Roosevelt in his message of acceptance, McNary mentioned Willkie only once. He described his running-mate as "able, magnetic, and forceful," and a few minutes later gave Wallace nearly as enthusiastic an O. K. as a "high-minded and sympathetic Secretary of Agriculture."

The presence of Senator McNary on the Republican ticket is symptomatic of the change the New Deal has wrought in American political thinking. Years ago he was helping George W. Norris resist the sale of Muscle Shoals to Henry Ford. He sponsored a farm bill vetoed by two Republican Presidents. He continually asked for Bonneville Dam during Republican administrations, and did not get it until Roosevelt entered the White House. He refused to take the stump for Hoover in 1932 and for Landon in 1936. William Allen White once wrote, "It just seems out of the realm of possibility that so fine a man as McNary should be a Republican nominee." And now McNary has to be a Republican nominee to give the party even a long-odds chance in the Far West.



Courtesy of the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*

All Connected Up

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Almazán's Texas Junta

BY CHARLES CURTIS MUNZ

San Antonio, Texas, September 18

FOR a week now the Almazanistas have been gathering here, exchanging Latin embraces, and waiting—for the distant sound of shots. There is no doubt in their minds about the Almazán revolution. "The people," they say, "will know what to do. We do not have to urge them on; we have to hold them back—until the proper time."

When will that "proper time" come? As these words are written, a rumor spreads that General Almazán is either back in Mexico already or on the way, and so perhaps the "proper time" is not far off. But whenever the time comes, soon or late, the Almazanistas here are ready. They say, "We wait only for the word of General Almazán."

San Antonio has harbored Mexican revolutionists before. In one sense San Antonio may be called the cradle of the Mexican Revolution. This half-Mexican, half-American city knew the burning Madero before the world knew him; it knew him before even most of Mexico knew him. Here in the warrens of the Mexican quarter Francisco Madero laid his plans and spun his dreams. Then he slipped across the border into Mexico and breathed his passionate love of freedom into the withered body of his native land. The power of Porfirio Díaz crumbled, and the Mexican Revolution began. Now, after thirty years, a new revolution is cradled that would bring the old to an end.

Of course the Almazanistas here deny that they have actually formed a junta. To admit having done so would probably bring them under the frown of the United States neutrality laws. But I do not think that they expect their protestations to be taken too seriously. They smile even when they are making them. It is virtually certain that an Almazanista junta has been formed here and is in operation.

Let us call it a sort of unofficial junta, subject to some later changes in membership and to transfer to Mexican soil as soon as hostilities break out. For the present at the head of the junta are Eduardo Neri and Francisco Cárdenas, who is no relation to President Lazaro Cárdenas. Francisco Cárdenas has taken the lead here, and Neri has stayed in the background, but Neri is really closer to Almazán and will have more to say when the shooting starts.

Both men are, or at least have been, powerful figures in Mexico. Neri was campaign manager for Almazán in the southern states, Cárdenas in the northern states. Neri is a famous lawyer, and was attorney general of the republic under Alvaro Obregón. Francisco Cárdenas is a former governor of Nuevo León, of which Monterrey is the capital. He was civil governor at the time that Almazán was military chief at Monterrey. Cárdenas's duty here seems to be to organize the Almazanistas and hold them steady against the day when Almazán will proclaim the revolution. But he is important also because Nuevo León and Monterrey are strategically important, and he has many political friends there. A good many persons here think that Monterrey will see the first standard of the Almazán revolt.

There are at least two military leaders on the junta—General José Mijares Palencia, a former governor of Puebla, and General José Dorantes, who was until just recently chief of the military post at Matamoros. Palencia took a leave of absence to campaign for Almazán. He has ignored a command to return to army service. Palencia is said by some to be the real head of the junta here, but I do not think that is true. He is the man who will probably lead the Almazán forces in the field—if they take it.

General Dorantes was given his post by Almazán while the latter was military chief at Monterrey. Almazán of course has been preparing for this revolt for a long time, probably as long as two years. At one time his adherents held practically all the military posts in northern Mexico, but many of them have been removed. Dorantes was removed by President Cárdenas only a few weeks ago. But have enough of the Almazán officers been removed? Every military post in northern Mexico must be regarded as a danger point. Francisco Cárdenas told me that 90 per cent of the army is with the Almazanistas. I am sure that is an extremely partisan view, but it may be true in some of the northern states, which are undoubtedly strong for Almazán.

Another Almazanista who may not actually be a member of the junta but who is working closely with it is Luis Montes de Oca, who was until last week director general of the Bank of Mexico. Señor Montes de Oca has been an Almazán supporter from the start. He is also, or was, a good friend of President Cárdenas. At the beginning of the campaign Montes de Oca told the President he was for Almazán and offered to resign. I am told that Cárdenas asked him to stay on his job and assured him that the election was to be free and fair. So Montes de Oca kept his job and campaigned for Almazán, appearing with him often at election rallies. Last week, with the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

showdown between Cárdenas and Almazán coming closer and closer, he resigned—whether voluntarily or under pressure I don't know, but probably under pressure.

Anyway, he arrived here in great haste one night this week, a few minutes after midnight, and registered at the St. Anthony Hotel. He slept a few hours, conferred a few hours with Eduardo Neri, Francisco Cárdenas, and General Palencia, and then at ten minutes after twelve noon he was off again, with a great show of secrecy. It was reported that he would see Almazán himself, presumably in Baltimore, but if not there, somewhere in the United States, and then go on to New York, where he would seek to gain the support of American financiers and political leaders.

Señor Montes de Oca is well fitted for this role of unofficial ambassador for an unofficial junta. He speaks fluent English and is reputed to be extremely wealthy. He has had a long and colorful career in Mexican political and financial history. Those who regard the Almazán movement as somewhat too close to Germany for comfort remember that Señor Montes de Oca was once consul general in Hamburg and has many friends in Germany. He later became Secretary of the Treasury under President Calles and continued in that important post under Ortiz Rubio and Portes Gil. In 1924, under Calles, he negotiated the famous Montes de Oca–Thomas W. Lamont debt-refunding agreement, and he is favorably recalled for it in American financial circles.

Señor Montes de Oca is regarded as the financial brains of the Almazán movement. But his present mission is more political than financial. The first thing he will try to do is to turn the American government away from its present rather favorable attitude toward Cárdenas and Avila Camacho. An invitation to Camacho to visit the White House, for example, might be a serious blow to the Almazán revolution. It is the duty of Señor Montes de Oca to ward off such a blow.

However, the Almazanistas here are confident almost to the point of cockiness. They think that the United States, because of its good-neighbor policy, will not be willing to intervene, and so the revolution will be a strictly Mexican fight, with their side winning easily. I have often wondered, talking to these Almazanistas here in the last few days, if they half realized what they were planning to do to their native land. I do not think they do. What they are planning to have is a short and merry revolution, a few shots here, a few shots there, the crumbling of the Cárdenas-Camacho regime, and—*Viva Almazán! Viva el Presidente!*

Well, maybe so. Maybe it will be over in a few days or a few weeks. The majority of Mexicans here in San Antonio are for Almazán, and they probably reflect fairly well the opinion of Mexicans in the northern states, especially in cities like Monterrey. But it seems to me that times have changed since Escobar revolted eleven years ago. The balance of power has very possibly passed from the ill-trained army to Toledano's armed workers and Graciano Sanchez's armed peasants. It may look like a little revolution to the Almazanistas, but to me it looks like civil war.

Everybody's Business

BY KEITH HUTCHISON

Prices and Bottlenecks

NOW that defense orders are reaching industry in large volume, there is need to guard against the danger of a general advance in commodity prices. Once a strongly rising trend were established, its effects would be cumulative, since fear of being cut short of supplies would induce business men to stock up far ahead of needs. Moreover, a sharp rise in basic materials would quickly be used to justify an increase in prices of finished goods. A vicious spiral thus started could not easily be halted by the usual remedy—a buyers' strike—owing to the important share of the market that is influenced by government "must" orders.

At the present time raw-material prices are still below the level of a year ago, when we were in the middle of a hectic but short-lived war boom. On September 27, 1939, *Barron's* sensitive-spot commodity index reached a peak of 72.5. On September 11 this year it was 59.1, which compares with 57.7 a week earlier and 56.0 at the end of August. It may be said, therefore, that the situation is not yet out of hand, but recent movements in individual commodities such as lumber, steel scrap, and hides justify vigilance. This is primarily the job of Leon Henderson, who is in charge of the price-stabilization division of the National Defense Advisory Committee. Mr. Henderson is believed to take the view that the supply-demand situation for most raw materials is not such as to excuse any considerable rise in prices. It has been pointed out, for instance, that quotations for certain non-ferrous metals have been moving forward although producers are operating far below capacity. In such a case the obvious remedy is an increase in output, but the Defense Commission has no authority to compel mine owners and others to extend operations. It can only use the methods of moral suasion and publicity.

These, however, are weapons not wholly to be despised, and both were called into play a short while ago when Mr. Henderson drew attention to a sharp rise in lumber prices, stating that it was not warranted by the defense program. Actually the movement appears to have been caused by exaggerated rumors of the amount of lumber which would be required for new army cantonments. However, it has now been pointed out by the Defense Commission that this building program will absorb less than one billion feet, whereas annual production of the lumber industry, operating at only 75 per cent of capacity, is around twenty-eight billion feet. Since this statement was issued, the Weyerhaeuser Sales Company, one of the leading units in the industry, has announced the stabilization of prices on a number of varieties

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of building timber, and the danger of a runaway lumber market appears to have been checked. Another possible factor in the situation is the government's control, through the Federal Surplus Commodity Corporation, of large holdings of timber salvaged in New England after the great hurricane of 1938. It now has a good opportunity to liquidate this asset.

Another branch of the government able to exercise a healthy influence on prices is the Department of Justice. Appreciation of the eagle eye of Mr. Thurman Arnold is growing, and the fear of attracting a Sherman Act investigation has probably curbed the appetite of many an industrialist able to influence prices. Recently the Anti-Trust Division brought an indictment against the Carboloy Corporation, a subsidiary of General Electric, charging it was fixing the price of tungsten-carbide tools, which play an important part in a number of defense industries. The corporation denied the allegations but by a curious coincidence announced a few days later drastic price reductions.

Although industry, by and large, is in a position to meet the increased demand caused both by the defense program and by greater purchasing power, it must be admitted that there are likely to be certain bottlenecks which, under normal circumstances, would only be enlarged by the pressure of higher prices. The steel industry is an example. Ingot production is now approaching practical capacity, and there is at least a prospect that during the next twelve months demand will outstrip supply. Is a rise in price necessary to induce a greater output? Judging by income statements, leading steel producers cannot grumble at the present price structure, for although costs of raw materials are somewhat higher, near-capacity operations have resulted in an impressive shrinkage of overhead charges per ton. However, there may be some owners of semi-obsolete high-cost plant now idle who do not find it profitable to resume production at present prices. The government would, I think, be making a great mistake to allow a general rise in steel quotations in order to make available the comparatively small additional output which high-cost producers might contribute. Rather than raise the price of steel to all consumers, including the defense industries, it would be far cheaper to guarantee such plants a modest profit as an inducement to reopen during the emergency period.

The question remains, however, whether the prospective demand for steel is such as to necessitate the building of new plants and if so whether higher prices would be sufficient to encourage the necessary capital investment? Unless it was assured sufficient profit to amortize its investment during the emergency period, it is improbable that any steel company would be willing to undertake an expansion program. For industry generally is very defeatist about the economic outlook once the present defense program is completed and hence is fearful of creating redundant capacity. Under these circumstances higher prices would not prove a remedy, and if steel demand outstrips supply to a critical extent, the government may be forced to institute priority schedules in order to prevent delays in the defense program. That could have very undesirable consequences, for it would mean rationing other steel users, such as the automobile and refrigerator industries, and might lead to a customers' scramble which would start prices rocketing.

In the Wind

A RESEARCH WORKER recently telephoned the New York Public Library to find out if it had a magazine called *Progress*. A library spokesman said that he had never heard of it and suggested that the inquirer call the *New Masses*. "*Progress* sounds like a radical paper," he said.

WILLKIE NEWS: When Russell Davenport, formerly managing editor of *Fortune*, joined the Willkie campaign forces, he appointed a secretary for the Associated Willkie Clubs. She intends to vote for Roosevelt and told him so, but she took the job because she believes in the two-party system, wants the G. O. P. to remain alive.

DEFINITE DISUNITY exists inside the "Union Now" movement, although the leaders are trying to keep it quiet. The dispute is chiefly over how hard to press for "Union Now," with Britain virtually the only nation left to unite with

THURMAN ARNOLD is a good deal more sympathetic to Wendell Willkie than are most of his New Deal colleagues. He has told intimates that all "liberal governments" have failed, and that maybe "a good reactionary" wouldn't hurt now.

MARK SULLIVAN had an unhappy experience recently. In his column in the New York *Herald Tribune* he quoted from an earlier column by Walter Lippmann in which Lippmann charged that the President was showing too much lust for power. But on the same day, in the same paper—just four columns away—Lippmann insisted that he saw no evidence that the President wanted to be a dictator.

AN ITALIAN DOCTOR who has just arrived in New York insists this tale is true: A young Fascist militiaman was operated on in the hospital where the doctor worked. As the young man was coming out of the anaesthetic, he sang the old Socialist fighting song, "Bandiera Rossa"—the "Red Flag." When he realized what he was doing he begged the doctor to forget about it and not to tell.

A RECENT EDITORIAL in the Toledo *Blade* praised Wendell Willkie for disavowing Coughlin, citing Willkie's "leadership in a tolerance which has been too long delayed in America." The same editorial column carried a piece commending a judge who had refused to prevent publication of the names of signers of Communist petitions; the *Blade* warned that signers "must be prepared to face unpleasant consequences."

THE *SATURDAY EVENING POST* ran an ad recently promising a piece about the man who exposed a "prominent C. I. O. crook." The article, about Westbrook Pegler, didn't mention any C. I. O. leader. The *Post* will retract.

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*]

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Native at Large

BY JONATHAN DANIELS

IN ONE nation-wide skirmishing I want to put myself down as the friend of filling stations and filling-station attendants. All up and down the United States they have not only sold me gasoline but given me also information, philosophy, courtesy, and comradeship. The courtesy sometimes has the slick sound of the lessons of the sales supervisor. In the bigger stations it is sometimes difficult to tell whether you are in Vermont or Arkansas by the look of the boys in the identical company-distributed dungarees. But they are different in their twang or drawl, though alike, too, as informed and interested natives wherever they are.

But not everybody likes the stations or wants the boys around. The embattled ladies in my home town descended like hot hornets not long ago on old Dr. Riddick, who wanted to put one up on his vacant lot by the State College, and now the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* has gone to the rescue of "Home Owner" in a city in which, the paper says, not everybody lives next to a filling station but everybody soon may hope or fear to. The oil companies, it says, are doing their best to make St. Louis a place from which to get away. It told the story sympathetically as "Home Owner" sees it, not only in St. Louis and Raleigh but in Bronxville and Des Moines. It made a dramatic design for a modern American street scene: "There are handsome homes in that 5900 block in Clemens. Wide lawns, princely trees, flowers as the seasons come and go, and pride of possession in the very atmosphere. But a fine old residence is to be razed and on its site a filling station is to be built—a garish, cluttering, destructive intrusion."

Even when we like filling stations, that picture touches the heart. I never have been to my knowledge on the 5900 block in Clemens, but I have been on such a scene before. Once such streets died in a slower decay if not greater decency with the arrival of relatively unobtrusive undertaking establishments, doctors' offices, and boarding-houses. Now both the rate and the character of change are altered. Also the change makes more noise and smell. But everywhere now change and resistance together represent the coincident American desires to keep the decorous past and go like hell at the same time.

There is not much doubt about the going. The latest figures I have at hand show around 200,000 filling stations in America doing about $2,000,000,000 worth of business. That is not the whole business. We are using every year well over 20 billion gallons of gasoline. My own state spends three times as much money for gasoline as it does for all the electric power in its industries and homes. Most other states do likewise, and all at an increasing rate among increasing filling stations. And I don't think there is any doubt about the desire to guard the lawns, the flowers, and the trees. I have seen the home owners arrayed and rampant. No motor fuel I know has half their explosive power. Their well-dressed descent on building authorities and zoning boards is the best answer I know to the suggestion that the American is not ready to fight for his land. Give him a little equity in a little piece of it and let him spend a few dollars or a Saturday afternoon on a lawn, and he is ready at the drop of a building permit to fight for his serenity and his scene.

It is not a new problem. Almost all the big and little towns now have ordinances designed to protect the pattern of neighborhoods and prevent swift and disruptive change. They slow the pace if they do not quite succeed in calming the passionate. But even where they are most successful there is never any quite even meeting between those who want to sell out to the oil companies and move to the country and their neighbors who want to stay where they are and as they were.

It is doubtful that there ever will be. But I would like to pay a road-riding debt to filling-station attendants even if it requires my entering a plea for the oil companies, to whom I've always paid cash. It is about time that even the people on Clemens Avenue began to realize that not the oil companies but themselves are tearing down the mansions and putting up the pumps. Every time an oil company buys, somebody sells. Occasionally those neighbors are most angry about it who have not been able to find purchasers themselves. Furthermore, the oil companies, being the heartless mercenary creatures that they are, acting always in terms of the rolling democracy of the least resistance, put up the pumps where the people will roll in. They don't seek serenity; they are looking for customers. And once the customers are there, Clemens Avenue is already gone.

It was a sweet old street with the changing flowers in the changing seasons and those old trees and lawns. Maybe once there was an iron dog or deer in the yard. Aunt Mamie was married there. Once papa fell down the steps. And before we began trading at the chain store the grocery boy came whistling with his basket through the gate. Goodby. It's gone. And we did it ourselves.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS *and the* ARTS

Chanson de France

Printemps 1940

BY IVAN GOLL

Nous n'irons plus au bois ma belle
Les lauriers sont coupés les ponts
Aussi les arcs-en-ciel
Et même le Pont d'Avignon

Jeanne d'Arc mortelle statue
Un peu de bronze ensanglanté
Dans cette France qui s'est tue
Ton coeur a cessé de chanter

Jeanne dans sa jupe de bure
Assise sous les framboisiers
Se prépare une confiture
Avec du sang de cuirassiers

La poule noire des nuages
Pond les oeufs pourris de la mort
Les coqs éplumés des villages
N'annoncent que les vents du Nord

Car son aube a du plomb dans l'aile
Le soleil n'est plus qu'un obus
Qui fait sauter les citadelles
Et le crocus sur les talus

Le ciel de France est noirci d'aigles
De lémures et de corbeaux
Ses soldats couchés dans les seigles
Ignorent qu'ils sont des héros

Ni Rouen ni Chartres ni Bruges
N'ont assez d'anges dans leurs tours
Pour lutter contre le déluge
Et les escadres de vautours

Taureau chassé des pâturages
Et du silence paternel
Devant la pourpre de l'outrage
Perd tout sang au grand soleil

Buvez buvez guerriers ivrognes
Les vins fermentés de la peur
Les sangs tournés de la Bourgogne
Les alcools amers du malheur

Les bières gueuses de la Meuse
Et les vins platinés du Rhin
Les sources saintes des Chartreuses
Et les absinthes du chagrin

Les larmes qui de chaque porte
Ont débordé sur le pays
Les eaux de vie et les eaux mortes
Grisantes comme le vin gris

Nous n'irons plus au bois ma belle
Les lauriers sont coupés les ponts
Aussi les arcs-en-ciel
Et même le Pont d'Avignon

The Goddess History

TO THE FINLAND STATION: A STUDY IN THE WRITING AND ACTING OF HISTORY. By Edmund Wilson. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $4.

MR. WILSON'S delightful series of character studies is not at all what it professes to be. It professes to be an analysis of interpretations of the meaning of history, beginning with the Renaissance philosopher Vico's rediscovery of the unity of history and with Michelet's discovery of Vico's historical principles. The first part of the volume leads one to assume and to hope that the issues raised by the Renaissance and the Enlightenment will be fully analyzed. Michelet's philosophy of history was nothing more than the simple idea of progress current in the Enlightenment. Mr. Wilson traces the disintegration of this optimism, particularly in the thought of Renan, Taine, and Anatole France. He reveals how quickly the optimism of the bourgeois revolution can be transmuted into cynicism and despair.

The way is thus prepared for the Marxist reinterpretation of the optimism of the Renaissance and Enlightenment, and one is led to expect a rigorous analysis of the Marxist philosophy of history. But nothing of this kind is forthcoming. Once embarked upon Marxism Mr. Wilson gives us a series of very penetrating character studies of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Trotsky. The basic theme is not completely lost, but it is certainly obscured. Mr. Wilson is primarily interested in the characters of the great revolutionary leaders and in their relations to each other. He gives us a clear picture of the relation between the amiable and modest Engels and the truculent and difficult Marx. We learn a good deal about Marx's private woes, about the varying fortunes of his children and his children's children. The prurient attitude of Marx's wife toward Engels's common-law marriage is traced in detail. The family backgrounds of both Lenin and Trotsky are sketched with great imagination and insight. We learn

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

something of Trotsky's "kulak" background and follow the vicissitudes of Lenin's early life and his later life in exile. We are helped to understand the genesis of Lenin's curiously impersonal genius.

Meanwhile, what is announced as the basic theme of the book emerges again and again, but the issues raised are never followed through to a final solution. Mr. Wilson rejects Marxist utopianism and sees no reason to share the Marxist hope that human nature will be redeemed once the corruptions of class interest are removed. He gives a penetrating account of Lenin's pragmatism and of his skill in relating to the Marxist dogma whatever he regards as right and practical in the immediate crisis. He proves that while Marxism ostensibly dismisses the traditional conception of "Providence" and while Marx declares that "history does nothing—it is rather man who acts, possesses, and fights in everything," yet a secularized version of Providence is insinuated into the Marxist interpretation of history. History is apotheosized: "There is a non-personal entity called 'History' which accomplishes things on its own hook and which will make the human story come out right." Mr. Wilson is rightly critical of this covert determinism in Marxist thought. He believes that the "Marxist will . . . has been transformed into the invisible power which supplies the motive force to run the escalator." But he does not discuss the problem raised by the fact that this determinism, this belief in an escalator of history, does not destroy but rather underpins the Marxist historical will. Whatever may be the errors of Marxist determinism, are there not elements of truth here in contrast to a too simple bourgeois voluntarism, to Vico's simple faith that the "social world is certainly the work of man"? Marxism may give us a too mechanized version of historical destiny, but it does maintain a paradoxical relation between voluntarism and determinism, without which no historical movement has ever maintained great vigor. Here is a socialized, secularized, and mechanized version of a very old faith expressed Biblically in the words: "Work out your own salvation in fear and trembling, for it is God who giveth you both to will and to do his good pleasure." This is one of the basic problems of any philosophy of history upon which no further light is shed.

What Mr. Wilson's data reveal is that there are no interpretations of history, at least not in the Western world (in which alone we have affirmative interpretations of history), in which the actions of the individual or of a class are not interpreted against the background of a total meaning of history (this is the inevitable determinism, the sense of destiny in all philosophies of history); that there are no interpretations of history which are not finally optimistic in the sense that they assume the victory of the cause which the philosopher of history regards as the keystone of history's meaning; and finally that there are no philosophies of history which do not ultimately identify the judgments of the believer with the ultimate judgments of the "Goddess History." In the light of these perennial problems, how are we to estimate Marxist determinism against bourgeois voluntarism; and Marxist optimism, with its provisional catastrophism, against the purer optimism of the bourgeois idea of progress; and how are we to assess both the bourgeois and the Marxist pretensions of having given us a new inter-

"Everything that

ANNA LOUISE STRONG

feels, thinks, says, writes is important. Her books have helped Americans see the world and America and helped them think. The more readers MY NATIVE LAND finds the better it will be for America."—*Rockwell Kent.*

A renowned world-traveller who has made a point of being "wherever the stormy struggle for human progress occurred" has come home. In a borrowed car, she has travelled over the country seeing how her own people work toward a better life. Her inspiring personal impression is ammunition for all who believe democracy should begin at home.

Viking Press $2.75

MY NATIVE LAND

"It is an excellent piece of work, which I read with great interest." —*Carey McWilliams.*

"A book badly needed in our time"—PROFESSOR FRANZ BOAS

More perhaps than any other science, anthropology has been perverted—fashioned by unscrupulous demagogues into a tool of hate and destruction. Here, clearly and simply, a noted anthropologist explains what race is and, more important, what it is not. With scientific precision she shatters the absurd claims made by chauvinistic racists, and points out the real factors involved in human accomplishment. $2.50

Ruth Benedict's

RACE: SCIENCE AND POLITICS

MODERN AGE BOOKS, 432 FOURTH AVE., NEW YORK, N. Y.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pretation of history when they merely restate much older interpretations, and sometimes arrive at seeming novelty by obscuring complexities of the problem? All these questions are raised explicitly or implicitly by Mr. Wilson, but one finds no attempt to answer them.

As a postscript one might add that it is difficult to understand the relevance of the cryptic title "To the Finland Station" even after the publishers have explained it.

REINHOLD NIEBUHR

A Great Letter Writer

HORACE WALPOLE'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH MADAME DU DEFFAND AND WIART. Edited by W. S. Lewis and Warren Hunting Smith. Yale University Press. Six volumes. $45.

THIS second instalment of the great new edition of Walpole's correspondence is likely to prove more interesting to the general reader than that devoted to the antiquary Cole. Only a few of Walpole's letters to Madame du Deffand survive, most of them having been probably destroyed at his own request, and the majority of the more than 2,500 pages of the present volumes are devoted to the communications addressed to him by the lady herself; these are not only precious documents but—when taken in moderation as I have taken them—interesting reading. Walpole's insistence on keeping the tone of the correspondence suggestive of aunt and nephew was probably sharper and more continuous than the aging amorist would have desired, and, indeed, rather sharper and rather more continuous than one would suppose to have been necessary when the age of the lady is taken into consideration. Nevertheless, though she protested against his scoldings, she continued to write endlessly the gossip of her circle, and the connoisseur to whom she wrote not only treasured her letters but evidently regarded them as so important a part of the picture which he wished to transmit to posterity that they must be printed after his death, even though, despite the destruction of his own side of the correspondence, he would appear in a light not too favorable. His was an age when only Samuel Richardson could take male virgins seriously, and Walpole had barely escaped being that monster, if, indeed, he escaped at all.

Madame du Deffand was already an elderly lady when Walpole first met her, and her salon was already old-fashioned. She belonged to the period before the rise of modish radicalism, and more up-to-date people had drifted elsewhere. But she still spent more than half her income on food—what a blessing that she never heard Oscar Wilde's famous remark about salons and restaurants—and she was visited by such oddly assorted notables as Gibbon, the King of Sweden, Benjamin Franklin, and the Holy Roman Emperor. Above all, she kept assiduously at work drawing portraits and retelling anecdotes as the only escape from boredom left to a survivor from a time when such pursuits seemed less futile than even she was perhaps beginning to believe them.

Probably most readers of today grow weary rather quickly of the world into which these letters take them. Even one thousand pages of exquisite trifling is a good deal too much, but the exquisiteness can still be perceived after one has grown weary of it. One sample will serve to illustrate how expertly Madame du Deffand could tell an anecdote which a single clumsiness would completely destroy. A letter written in 1768 begins:

> Vous m'avez cité la "Nouvelle Héloïse"; permettez, à mon tour, que je vous reconte une petite histoire. Feu le Cardinal d'Estrés, *âge de soixante et dix, quatre-vingts, ou* cent ans, ce tout de même, se trouva un jour avec Mme de Courcillon, plus belle qu'un ange, plus précieuse que tout l'Hôtel de Rambouillet, d'un maintien, d'une sagesse, d'une réputation merveilleux. Les charmes de cette belle dame ragaillardirent le vieux Cardinal; il avait de l esprit, de la grâce: il lui dit des galanteries, il voulut même baiser sa main; elle prit un ton sévère, le repoussa, le traita fort mal: "Ah! Madame, Madame!" s'écria le vieux Cardinal, *"vous prodiguez vos rigueurs."*

Is it too much to imagine that she meant Walpole to understand a sly rebuke? Was he also too prodigal with his severities?

Most of the letters in the collection have been published before, but they here appear in what is doubtless the final form and are both edited and annotated with the greatest thoroughness and the most meticulous care. The very brief introduction by the editors is not only a model of compactness but graceful and penetrating as well.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Dialogue by Wells

BABES IN THE DARKLING WOOD. By H. G. Wells. Alliance Book Corporation. $2.75.

IT WAS June of 1939 when Gemini and Stella, exaltedly living in sin, swore they would lift the world "from the hands of the beasts and bullies and blockheads." She was a Newnham undergraduate, he an Oxford man who wrote for one of the English highbrow weeklies. They talked. They orated on such burning questions as sex, religion, social psychology, a world revolution of their own shaping; and whenever their proud parent, Mr. H. G. Wells, felt that he had shown off his bright darlings at the risk of the reader's ennui, someone else talked with very much their same earnest voices. Meanwhile, no actual aid to the world was accomplished.

It should seem no paradox to say that although Mr. Wells is occasionally tedious he is inveterately interesting, or that even his indifferent novels demand attention for a thoughtful chapter in one and an incisive paragraph in another of them. This is a "novel of ideas" as he states, rather defensively, in its preface, a symposium, "the most comprehensive and ambitious dialogue novel I have ever attempted," stemming straight from his "Ann Veronica" and "The Holy Terror." Unlike them, however, this book lacks continuous drive toward the clarification of a single problem; it is spread thin over the whole world of puzzlement in which the young English intellectual lives; it is a compound of essays in dialogue form.

Unlike, too, the dialectic novels of Huxley and the plays of Shaw, Mr. Wells's "Babes in the Darkling Wood" has insufficient physical action to draw your interest from one to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

another of his always ingenious proposals. Simply, his babes are detected in their life of "monogamy without marriage"; Gemini, disinherited, jaunts—off stage—toward the Soviet Union to study a political system which seems ideal to him; the invasion of Finland and Poland disillusions him; he starves—still off stage—is bombed, and breaks down mentally before he can be brought to Uncle Robert and his cure by "psychosynthesis." The end of it all is in talk again, during May, 1940, with the babes deciding to begin "a preliminary study of the possible intellectual enlargement of the world."

Mr. Wells, through his various advocates, rants against university education, psychoanalysis, God, Chamberlain, and the war of the Germans "who think they look like Swedes." He foresees a "World Federation by Armistice" when this war is stalemated, but these ideas as presented out of the mouths of the babes in the darkling wood lack conviction. The babes rationalize, change their minds to no profit. There are such statements, obviously of the author's belief, as that "there are no masses of illiterates with a common sense of injustice any longer in the world" and that governmental centers of power will be needless ("you haven't to obey *anyone*") when each man learns the Right Thing To Do—capitals by Wells. This latter is all very nice, but it is neither helpful nor provocative enough for exposition.

It seems crass to say of an old master that he hasn't mastered his medium, but in regard to this book I believe it to be true. This is a neuter work, with neither the force of Wells's non-fiction nor the narrative appeal of his pure novels. It is Wells worth borrowing. HASSOLDT DAVIS

Radio and Ideas

RADIO AND THE PRINTED PAGE. An Introduction to the Study of Radio and Its Role in the Communication of Ideas. By Paul F. Lazarsfeld. Duell, Sloan, and Pearce. $4.

OVER the quackery and pseudo-research of radio, the work of Dr. Lazarsfeld and his associates at the Office of Radio Research of Columbia University stands up like the mast of a broadcasting station. Even against a different background this would be an important book, providing a veritable conspectus of research in the entire field with which it deals: an account of studies finished, work in progress, and research which ought to be undertaken. It summarizes not only most of the research that Dr. Lazarsfeld's office has done since 1937, but almost every other reputable study that contributes to the problem. This book does not solve the problems that it raises, but it does bring to bear upon their solution as much good evidence as now exists, and it makes no bones about stating as clearly what is not known.

Who listens to radio and why? Why do people like a program? What do they get out of listening? What of radio's educational pretensions, aspirations, and experiments? What sort of radio programs are listened to by people who don't read serious books or magazines? Who gets his news by radio and who from the papers? How do listening habits differ according to economic status, education, and social background? These are all urgent questions. So many people have

Can We Defend 13,000 Miles of American Empire?

• Whether we like it or not, we must admit that there is an American Empire that extends from the China Sea and Bering Strait to the Caribbean—and presents not only harassing defense problems, but social and economic problems as well. Is Puerto Rico a trade success or a wretched social failure? Strategically, have we gotten the most out of Alaska? Should Hawaii be given statehood? Here are penetrating, propaganda-free evaluations of conditions as they are in each of America's possessions, by nine experts who are either natives or long residents of the regions they describe. 408 pages, 35 illustrations.

THE AMERICAN EMPIRE

Edited by William H. Haas

At bookstores, $4.00

1891 - 1941 50 YEARS OF PUBLISHING The University of Chicago Press

Adventures in Ideas

William Montague is one of those rare philosophers who can develop a thought as a connoisseur might exhibit a gem, turning it round and round until all its facets are ablaze. His writings, like Plato's *Dialogues*, are dramas in which ideas are the adventuring heroes.

"Philosophic excitement. As wholly alive as any book in philosophy could possibly be." —H. A. OVERSTREET

"The sturdiness of his belief in the ability of the modern philosopher to deal with the specific features of the universe, his sense that such dealings are bound to be momentous and exciting, make Professor Montague's an invigorating book. It has a kind of point counterpoint." —PADRAIC COLUM, N. Y. Times

THE WAYS OF THINGS

A Philosophy of Knowledge, Nature and Value

BY WILLIAM PEPPERELL MONTAGUE

$4 at bookstores

PRENTICE-HALL, Inc., 70 Fifth Avenue, New York

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

flung themselves into radio in the blind hope that this new and magic medium might reach people impervious to the printed page that it is high time some healthy corrective was introduced. While producing a softly spoken, yet damning case against most of the "serious" broadcasting now heard, the author believes that a large group of the population can benefit from radio education, "people with some intellectual training but with weak incentives toward serious concerns."

A word should be said about the point of view of the book. So much research in the social sciences has been stultified by an overprecious objectivity that it is good to be able to recommend a book which recognizes the obligations implied by Dr. Lynd's "Knowledge for What?" The hot breath of the times is on the author's neck. He feels the practical men of the age at his elbow as he writes, impatient to be off with new applications of new knowledge. And regardless of one's cynicism toward the practical men of present-day broadcasting, it is some small comfort to see whose hand is being strengthened by Dr. Lazarsfeld's conclusions.

FREDERICK A. GUTHEIM

Look Homeward

YOU CAN'T GO HOME AGAIN. By Thomas Wolfe. Harper and Brothers. $3.

MY FEELING about any novel by Thomas Wolfe is that even if it were not good I'd like it. I'd like it for its ebullient, electric vitality, its obvious sincerity, the glowing, almost incandescent poetry of its style, the sense which it gives, however confusedly, of a meaning, a unified current, recognized in the seemingly helter-skelter maze of human life. These qualities light up "You Can't Go Home Again" for me, just as they illuminated "Look Homeward, Angel," "Of Time and the River," "The Web and the Rock," and many shorter pieces; but there is no denying that Wolfe's methods, his themes, and to a large extent his material remained the same throughout his work, with the result that his inspiration suffered a gradual diminution of intensity.

That George Webber = Eugene Gant = Tom Wolfe is an equation almost too obvious to mention, in spite of the fact that George is described in "The Web and the Rock" and "You Can't Go Home Again" as short and stocky, while Wolfe was a mountain of a man and Eugene Gant was supposed to be long and rangy. When an author bestows his own personality on a hero and surrounds him with the author's own acquaintances under the transparent disguise of altered names, it makes little difference that he knocks five or six inches off his stature. If you have read "How to Write a Novel," Wolfe's account of the composing and publishing of "Look Homeward, Angel," you will find the first half of this last book virtually a retelling of that bit of autobiography. The rest of the story deals with his love affair with "Esther" and its conclusion, with the stock-market crash, and with his travels in Nazi Germany, several chapters of the latter part of the book having, if my memory does not fail me, already appeared as short stories in magazines.

His two principal themes are, as always, man's essential loneliness and the mystic movement of time, like a river that seems ever the same but is constantly shifting. You can't go home again, simply because "home" isn't there; both it and you have changed, and your romanticized memory-picture of it bears no more resemblance to the sordid reality than a surrealist painting does to an unretouched photograph.

But even themes so universally applicable as these can be overworked, and the pregnant symbolism, the driving power that made "Look Homeward, Angel" stand out above the common herd of novels like a mountain dawn, has given way to a sprawling looseness of structure that becomes more and more noticeable as the book progresses. There are diversions into long essay passages bound to the narrative by only the most tenuous threads. Nor can this be attributed altogether to the fact that the work is posthumous, not subject to final revision, since the same tendency had already manifested itself all too plainly in "Of Time and the River."

The very nature of these conventional complaints against Wolfe's art, however, makes them a sort of compliment, a grudging admission that he had something too vitally alive to be judged entirely according to the criteria of form—in short, he irritates us more, because he had the magic power and did not use it precisely as we should have liked, than does the run-of-the-mill writer who obviously was not born with the divine fire. Wolfe belongs to the tribe of Whitman, Emerson, Carlyle—especially the last. Like Carlyle, he was emotionally disturbed by the stupidity and selfishness of the world, without having any specific formula to offer as a remedy; he had a passion for work and a transcendental scorn for the shackles of form; even his style, with its purple splendor, its heavy leaning on apostrophe and impersonation, its ironic ranting against mediocrity, echoes that "stormy sophist with his mouth of thunder" who preached Cassandra-like warnings to the Victorians. Chapter 29, The Hollow Men, with its bitter allegory about Standard Concentrated Blots, sounds like an excerpt from "Past and Present."

And I feel about Wolfe very much as I feel about Carlyle: though I disagree with a great many things he says, I don't know anyone who can say them more splendidly.

LOUIS B. SALOMON

Only the Ninety and Nine

THE OXFORD BOOK OF CHRISTIAN VERSE. Edited and Chosen by Lord David Cecil. Oxford University Press. $3.

THERE can be no real dispute with the poems Lord Cecil has included in his anthology; nor any question that they do present an adequate and standard picture of Christian poetry in English since Chaucer. One would have chosen differently here and there from a favorite writer; and as always in the Oxford collections there is the pointless omission of American poets. But with a generous representation from the holy songs of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; from Donne, Herbert, Crashaw, Vaughan; from the eighteenth-century hymns; from Patmore, Hopkins, Rossetti, Eliot—and, by the way, poems on Biblical and religious themes by the great seculars—one has the best of "writers whose poems are consistent with the doctrines of orthodox Christianity."

What is tepid and unsatisfying about the compilation

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

arises more from what is not in the book, and from the tone of the long introduction. Lord Cecil's attitude toward Blake illustrates. He "is doubtful whether Blake should appear at all" because of his unorthodoxy; but because of the fact that Blake is so patently Christian in another sense, Cecil includes him. "But for that pressing concourse of vague mystics" other than Blake, the pages of this collection have been closed. One wonders to whom he refers. On the other hand, he names Milton as no Christian at all but a Stoic who "did not live by faith, scorned hope, and was indisposed toward charity." Yet Milton with his nominally Christian poems is copiously represented. It looks as if the editor has his very own and narrow views of what is orthodox, and that it has more to do with the letter than the spirit.

There is such a thing as a specific Christian quality, varying from writer to writer; and in matters of poetry, of sensibility, any other orthodoxy is inadmissible. It is experienced in the whores and clowns of Rouault as much as in Fra Angelico; in the Doctor and Tiny O'Toole in Djuna Barnes's "Nightwood" equally as in "The Pearl." In this collection I miss Langland, Marlow's "See where Christ's blood streams in the firmament," Wilde, and T. E. Hulme—to indicate a few very different examples.

The Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. is the merest of official establishments. The remaking of all of society into the New Man—that is, the remaking of all of each member—is a process that has hardly started, as the old quip has it. "Before the New Testament God, man allows himself to express only unexceptionable sentiments," Cecil writes. Naturally such "sentiments" were the first to be brought up, to be redeemed, before the new God. And to many, including Cecil, the expression of these represent the limits of orthodoxy. But according to the Gospels, the God of the New Testament was notable precisely for his interest in recognizing the "exceptionable" experiences. And there have been people, and therefore poets, ever since, who have tried to preserve the riches of the old gods for the new—poets particularly, since it is from the primitive levels of emotion that poetry's real body springs, iris necklace and glossy hide. Thus Eliot writes: "The recognition that even the most primitive feelings should be part of our heritage (in a Christian society) seems to me to be the explanation and justification of the life of D. H. Lawrence."

It is because Lord Cecil has not this sure sense of Christian sensibility whatever habit of language it may wear, that his anthology, though good, lacks distinction. The truly orthodox is usually a paradox; and Cecil's taste never saves itself by self-contradiction. SHERMAN CONRAD

Editor Hough

COUNTRY EDITOR. By Henry Beetle Hough. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $3.

HERE is a verdict on human values rendered by a shrewd and sensitive judge of them. Here also is the story of the recent years of the *Vineyard Gazette,* published, edited, printed, and practically distributed, weekly during the winters and bi-weekly during the summers, by Mr. Hough and his wife Betty, assisted by their collie Matrix, in the little

Don't Miss It!

The New Book by
THURMAN W. ARNOLD
author of
"The Folklore of Capitalism"

The BOTTLENECKS OF BUSINESS

"THIS is an important book. Every business man should read it with prayer, meditation and bicarbonate of soda. If he really wants free enterprise to survive in these United States, here is the way, and I expect the only way, to do it."—STUART CHASE in *N. Y. Herald Tribune "Books."*

2nd Printing

$2.50
REYNAL & HITCHCOCK
New York

For the First Time in a single Book---

The full scope of the educational theories, principles, aims and methods of . . .

JOHN DEWEY

America's foremost educator discusses what schools and colleges must do to educate young people for the problems and responsibilities that lie ahead!

EDUCATION TODAY
by John Dewey

John Dewey has devoted a lifetime to securing a finer, sounder education for American youth. In this important book he explains the achievements of modern education and sets forth clearly the goals toward which we must strive with redoubled energy in these critical times. Foreword by JOSEPH RATNER. *A Minton, Balch Book.* $3.75

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON, today more than ever, is headline news. The execution of our vast defense program has accelerated political activity in the capital. And intelligent readers throughout the country are now demanding first-hand reporting and interpretation of developments in Congress, in the White House, and in the branches of government administration. For that reason *The Nation* has now established a

Regular Washington Bureau

headed by I. F. Stone, associate editor of *The Nation.*

Mr. Stone has had wide experience as an editorial writer for the Philadelphia *Record* and as an editor of the New York *Post.* He is the author of "The Court Disposes" and a frequent contributor to leading magazines. "Aviation's Sitdown Strike," a series of articles by Mr. Stone in *The Nation,* created a sensation in Congress, and directed national attention to a major bottleneck in the defense program.

From his new post this seasoned journalist will cover political activities in the capital. The first of his weekly Washington letters will appear in the next issue of

THE *Nation*

MAIL THIS COUPON TODAY

THE NATION 55 Fifth Ave. New York, N. Y.

Please enter my *Nation* subscription for the term checked below for which I inclose $.....

☐ ONE YEAR $5.00 ☐ TWO YEARS $8.00
☐ THREE YEARS $11.00

Special Introductory Offer—13 WEEKS $1.00

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

Additional postage per year: Foreign, $1; Canadian, $1

9-28-40

town of Edgartown on Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.

Publicity about this book may have created the impression that it is another one of those cracker-box glorifications of the small town in which the tobacco-chawin' editor spins tall yarns about professional "local characters." On the contrary, it is a serene and dignified chronicle of civilized living, written in a style as distinguished as that which marks the editorials in the *Gazette* itself.

About Martha's Vineyard, the wooded island set across six miles of blue water from Cape Cod, there has gathered a pleasing mythology. It begins with the story of Leif Erickson and his painted sails along the fog-shrouded beaches of Gay Head at the island's tip, and it runs through the fantasy that returning explorers gave to Will Shakespeare, at the "Mermaid," descripions of the Vineyard which he used for his settings of "The Tempest." No myth, however, adheres to the fishermen descendants of the English who made the first permanent settlement on the island when Thomas Mayhew set foot on Edgartown sands in 1642. There is a homespun reality about these island folk, together with a jealously guarded self-sufficiency, which Mr. Hough and the reader find most refreshing. Even today, when from early June until late September the island's winter population of 5,000 is augmented by 35,000 summer visitors, the natives keep gnarled control of their own affairs. A man's fame on the mainland gets him nowhere unless he passes the Vineyard's test of fitness. You may sit in front of Carl Reed's store at the fishing village of Menemsha at mail time and watch the celebrities pass by on August evenings. Bearers of important names in every phase of American activity are, however, less than the dust beneath a Mayhew's feet if they have flunked the intangible island test. The silence that descends among the fishermen after an outlawed summer visitor has made some fatuous remark is the icy silence of New York's Union League in the presence of a visiting Elk from Omaha. Denys Wortman, who was brought first to the island at the age of three but after fifty years is still an "off-islander," once drew a picture of such an encounter. A copy of it hung in a Menemsha fishing shack that was swept away by the hurricane of '38. In it a "flanneled fool" asks a group of natives, "What do you do up here in the winters?" The tight-lipped answer is, "We think up answers to the fool questions visitors ask us in the summers."

It is the time between mid-September, when the last Willkie-buttoned yachtsman has puffed away from Edgartown, to the next June's arrival of the station wagons which Mr. Hough covers with quiet brilliance in "Country Editor." Then the island life takes up the author's theme: "Things have been big for so long now. For instance, a great many people are not only unable to imagine what a small weekly newspaper and a small town are like, but they do not even try, because they assume that anything small is simply an early and imperfect version of something big. I doubt if there are many who know that these particular small things, and of course others, are more different in kind than in size. They are not underdeveloped. They are mature, complete specimens of what they have always been and always will be." Out of such small, insular if you like, but certainly beloved specimens Mr. Hough has made his important book.

MCALISTER COLEMAN

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Letters to the Editors

For Thomas and Krueger

Dear Sirs: The undersigned members of the Independent Committee for Thomas and Krueger (276 Fourth Avenue, New York City) believe that the Presidential campaign of 1940, coming in a period of vast social change, presents an unprecedented challenge to men and women who know that there can be no lasting political freedom without economic justice.

The manner in which this challenge is met may determine whether the United States will plunge down that road which Europe has already traveled to its doom or will utilize its economic and geographical advantages to build a dynamic democracy.

We believe that the United States can challenge the world-wide drift toward fascism by defeating the social reaction and nationalist intolerance which are already threatening political democracy at home, by democratic planning for human needs rather than totalitarian planning for human destruction; that a workable democracy which offers *both* security and freedom will serve as an inspiration to the oppressed peoples of the whole world.

It is because we believe these things that we are supporting the candidacy of Norman Thomas and Maynard Krueger in this campaign. They are the only candidates who may be counted upon for unwavering opposition to the forces of reaction, alien-baiting, militarist hysteria, and the drive toward war. More important, they are the only candidates who offer—in place of a false "war prosperity"—an alternative program of democratic planning which can really meet the challenge of a totalitarian Europe. We agree with Norman Thomas that "successful defense may well be the by-product of harnessing our machinery under democratic control for the conquest of poverty."

There is no material difference in the foreign policies of the two major candidates and almost no difference in their fundamental domestic policies. This period of world crisis is no time for compromise with what may seem a slightly "lesser evil." It is a year in which men and women of integrity must be willing to bear witness for the principles in which they believe.

Norman Thomas and Maynard Krueger will not be elected in November, but a million men and women united behind them in this campaign and on Election Day will serve as a brake to undemocratic tendencies in this country and effectively influence the policies of the successful candidate.

The lifelong record of Norman Thomas as a spokesman for all that is best in American life, a fighter against every form of reaction, is known to all your readers. We ask these men and women to vote their hopes rather than their fears in November by voting for Norman Thomas and Maynard Krueger.

LEONARD ABBOTT, RONALD BAINTON, CYRUS LEROY BALDRIDGE, HELEN MARSTON BEARDSLEY, EDGAR S. BRIGHTMAN, HOWARD BRUBAKER, V. F. CALVERTON, BERNARD C. CLAUSEN, SARAH CLEGHORN, LAETITIA CONARD, LEONARD P. COTTRELL, JR., MARGARET DE SILVER, JOHN DEWEY, ELEANOR A. EATON, JUSTUS EBERT, HENRY PRATT FAIRCHILD, KATE CRANE GARTZ, SIDNEY E. GOLDSTEIN, BERNARD D. N. GREBANIER, ESTHER FISKE HAMMOND, GEORGE W. HARTMANN, WILL HERBERG, MARY HILLYER, ISADOR HOFFMAN, JESSE H. HOLMES, JOHN HAYNES HOLMES, SIDNEY HOOK, B. W. HUEBSCH, ALLAN A. HUNTER, WILLIAM LLOYD IMES, JOHN PAUL JONES, ALFRED KAZIN, CARL J. LANDES, HALFORD E. LUCCOCK, LENORE G. MARSHALL, MILTON S. MAYER, ALIDA LEESE MILLIKEN, A. J. MUSTE, HENRY NEUMANN, LISTON M. OAK, WILLIAM A. ORTON, KIRBY PAGE, GEORGE LYMAN PAINE, BURTON RASCOE, A. PHILIP RANDOLPH, JAMES RORTY, RICHARD ROVERE, JOHN NEVIN SAYRE, VIDA D. SCUDDER, EMILY PALMER STEARNS, WALTER W. SIKES, CAROLINE SINGER, WILLARD UPHAUS, FRANCES WINWAR, BERTRAM D. WOLFE, WINNIFRED WYGAL

New York, September 23

Food for Europe

Dear Sirs: Not long ago at the Bohemian Club's camp "The Grove," Herbert Hoover spoke frankly of relief for Europe. He said it was impossible under present conditions. Now that blockade, that is, hunger, was recognized as a legitimate weapon by both sides, there was not the slightest hope that Britain would give permission for food to be shipped or that Germany would keep hands off even if the government promised it would. He said openly that 2,000,000 bushels of wheat shipped to relieve Poland had been seized, partly by Germany, partly by Russia. It had not gone to Polish sufferers. Mr. Hoover should say this publicly so that we whose consciences are torn by this sickening dilemma may understand that any food sent to Europe will go to support the German army in its destruction of democracy. L. G. J.

Berkeley, Cal., September 16

Free Speech?

Dear Sirs: It is the lamentable truth that facts important to the welfare of a state but detrimental to big business are not given publicity by newspaper or radio. The people themselves have even ceased to consider the newspaper and radio as a means of publicity when the facts conflict with big-business interests.

Recently it was discovered that whole counties in my state where the rainfall was heaviest had from 60 per cent to 92 per cent of their water wells dry—a condition never before known. This lack of water was due to the use, pollution, and displacement of the water by oil companies. The newspapers had the facts, but did not publish a word about them. I took these facts and their proof to different important men in the hope they or their organizations could bring pressure on the newspapers to publish the truth.

The biggest credit man in the state was pleased to get the facts as they were of immense economic importance to his organization. But he said, "We can't do anything as an organization. The big oil companies dominate this organization both in the state and nationally." He discarded the idea of the retail merchants in the town bringing any pressure to bear upon the newspapers because the merchants catered to a trade that obtains its money from oil.

A lawyer owning land in the affected area was very much concerned. He knew at once that the only remedy was legislative. "You must get the facts to the farmers," he said, "but how?" He never even considered the radio, the farm journal, or the newspapers. Letters to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prominent farmers in different communities was his solution.

Next, the big politician examined the facts carefully, smoked very hard, then said, "I knew those companies were using water over there, but I never thought it was that serious. Only thing you can do is get out some pamphlets. That's what I do in a case like this."

It is clear that we the public have ceased to consider the newspaper, the radio, or any journals that carry big-business advertising as mediums of publicity when that publicity would be detrimental to big business. It's a funny kind of free speech we have.

M. BASS

Wichita, Kan., September 18

Professor Goldenweiser

Dear Sirs: Some of the readers of *The Nation* may not know of the death of Professor Alexander A. Goldenweiser at his home in Portland, Oregon, on July 6. He was known to a large circle, and before he left the East to take a position on the West Coast he was a well-known figure among New York City intellectuals. His death has removed a social scientist who has influenced many thinkers in diverse fields.

Professor Goldenweiser was one of the group of distinguished teachers who made up the first faculty of the New School for Social Research, and to those who knew the school in those first years he is an inseparable part of that successful experiment. He taught anthropology, and he had a special gift for making his material stimulating and exciting to those who had no detailed background in the subject. In 1922 he published a widely used survey of his field, "Early Civilization," and in 1933 he collected his professional articles in "History, Psychology, and Culture."

When the New School gave up its original plan of a full-time faculty staff, Professor Goldenweiser was for a time on the editorial staff of the Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, and later went to the West Coast. Since 1930 he has been professor of thought and culture at the University of Oregon and since 1933 visiting professor of sociology at Reed College.

He believed strongly in a closer rapprochement among the various fields of the social sciences and exemplified his belief in his own learning and discourse. His many friends and pupils mourn the loss of a rarely gifted teacher.

RUTH BENEDICT

New York, September 19

Odets on the Critic's Role

Dear Sirs: When your Mr. Haggin recommends phonograph needles or qualities of recordings he is readable, but his attempts at musical criticism, of modern music, for instance, are lamentable.

A case in point was his foolishness about the recording of the new Roy Harris Symphony. He wrote, "I have confidence in my own ability to hear greatness in music and the lack of greatness. . . ." Brave lad! He has listened to the Harris music and has found it lacking in greatness. Apparently Mr. Haggin does not live in America. Or does he live *too* much in America? When will he see that all of us may be dead before a *great* artist appears on the American scene, a Mozart or Beethoven, in *any* medium?

However, Mr. Haggin has a real point. He objects to the early deification of Roy Harris by his admirers, their premature reading of Kansas plains and Wyoming winds into his work. Mr. Haggin's dislike of the admirers themselves is even more intense than his dislike of the music. He is right: the admirers for the most part are just as uncreative and uncritical as Mr. Haggin himself, although they have one virtue—hopefulness.

I am not objecting to Mr. Haggin's personal preferences, but to his lack of *situation* within the American scene. To intimate, as he does constantly, that "Harris and his group" are not Mozarts may be truth; simultaneously it is impudent irrelevance, irresponsible, uncreative, and sterile, not to say reactionary. For today our "critics" can be useful only when they recognize that the Roy Harrises of our creative life are but beginners in *a country of beginners.*

The responsible critic sees the paucity of seriously intentioned musical talents here; he understands the necessity of humble and small beginnings, cherishes the smallest scrap of real talent—I am not here estimating the talent of Harris. He helps it, nourishes it, applauds and spanks it, but always with a love for a future which, he knows, must grow from these small beginnings. Here original character in an art work is the astounding exception, never the rule. Pray, do not kick it in its young and tender face! In short, O wooden-head, spare that baby tree!

CLIFFORD ODETS

New York, September 15

Order Your

BOOKS

from THE NATION

At the request of many readers who reside in communities in which no book shop has been established, *The Nation* now offers to deliver any book to your door at the regular publisher's price (postfree) provided payment is received with the order or publisher's price plus postage if sent C. O. D.

•

Please address your order to

The Reader's Service Division

THE NATION

55 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK

CONTRIBUTORS

JAY ALLEN is a well-known newspaperman. He served as a correspondent in Spain during the early part of the Spanish civil war.

GRANVILLE HICKS, teacher and critic, is author of "Figures of Transition," "John Reed: The Making of a Revolutionary," and other books.

RICHARD L. NEUBERGER, author of several books on social and political problems of the Far West, is on the staff of the Portland *Oregonian.*

CHARLES CURTIS MUNZ, author of "Land Without Moses," has made a close study of the racial and economic problems of the Southwest.

IVAN GOLL is an Alsatian now living in this country. He is the author of a series of books written around the character of Jean Sans Terre.

REINHOLD NIEBUHR is professor of applied Christianity at Union Theological Seminary.

HASSOLDT DAVIS is author of the novel "Save Me the Sun."

FREDERICK A. GUTHEIM has written for *Public Opinion Quarterly* and other magazines on the modern propaganda techniques employed by governments.

INFORMATION FOR SUBSCRIBERS

THE NATION, 55 Fifth Ave., New York. Price, 15 cents a copy. By subscription—Domestic: One year $5; Two years $8; Three years $11. Additional Postage per year: Foreign, $1; Canadian, $1. The Nation is indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest, Dramatic Index, Index to Labor Periodicals, Public Affairs Information Service. Two weeks' notice and the old address as well as the new are required for change of address.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED